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Tuesday January 9 1996

Abu Dhabi D 8.50	Hong Kong HKS 25	Pakistan R 70
Albania L 220	Hungary F 200	Poland Z 570
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Austria AS 28	Indonesia ID 50	Qatar Q 20
Bahrain B 20	Israel IS 50	Romania R 200
Belgium BF 60	Italy I 50	Russia R 200
Bulgaria L 170	Jordan JO 100	Slovakia S 200
Canada CA 12.50	Kuwait KD 50	Slovenia SLT 200
Cyprus C 100	Labrador LS 150	Spain P 200
Czech Republic KC45	Latvia LV 100	Sweden SK 16
Denmark DK 16	Lithuania LT 50	Switzerland SF 3
Dubai D 50	Malaysia M 50	Taiwan TW 200
Egypt E 20	Mexico M 50	Turkey TL 100.000
Finland F 50	Morocco D 15	Ukraine UA 200
France FR 11	Netherlands G 3.75	USA US 2.75
Germany DM 3.50	Norway N 15	
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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

46,444

Why America is turning against the President's wife

Hillary: First Lady and liar?

Guardian 2 with European weather



Education

Are civil servants taking over the Universities?

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The rise of Spectator editor Frank Johnson

The tale of a Stendhalian hero

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Tributes and red roses as France goes into mourning for Mitterrand

Alex Duval Smith in Paris

FRANCE was preparing last night for a period of solemn religious mourning for its avowedly agnostic former president, François Mitterrand, who died yesterday, aged 79, after a three-year battle against prostate cancer.

roses were laid by ordinary citizens at Socialist party headquarters at the Invalides, it was announced that the funeral will take place on Thursday — decreed as a national day of remembrance by the Elysée Palace.

where he was born and of which he said, in his heart, he had never left. A solemn mass, broadcast live on television, will be held at the Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris at the same time as the family funeral.

Paris at 10.56am yesterday. He was said to have died at his desk at 8.30am. To the end, he had enjoyed a double private life. Georges-Marc Benamou, a family friend and biographer, said Mitterrand had spent Christmas with his companion, Anne Pingeot, and their daughter, Mazarine, in the Egyptian resort of Aswan. He then celebrated New Year's Eve with

his wife, Danielle, their sons Gilbert and Jean-Christophe and close family at his country home in Latche, south-west France. After paying his respects, President Jacques Chirac used his new year address to the media to pay homage to his predecessor. "During his 14 years [in power], Mr Mitterrand wrote an important page in the history of our country. He guaranteed

the functioning of our institutions, he guarded the democratic process with serenity," he said. Leaders from around the world paid tribute to Mitterrand, who founded the modern French Socialist party in 1971. John Major said he had made an "outstanding contribution to public life, particularly in France, throughout the post-war period."

At the Socialist party headquarters yesterday, many echoed the view that Mitterrand's greatest achievement was his commitment to a united Europe. Yvette Ouge, a retired café owner, aged 63, had voted Socialist all her life. "He was an enormous pillar of both politics and intellectual life. He helped along the modernisation of this country to an unbeliev-

able extent while uniting Europe," she said. Not everyone praised him. One Parisian, a retired history teacher, aged 70, paid tribute to Mitterrand's leadership while feeling "alienated by his ideas". Another man called him a "rascal".

France mourns, page 6; Leader comment, page 8; Obituary, page 10

Push for women MPs illegal

Martin Wainwright
Clare Dyer and
Rebecca Smithers

LABOUR'S controversial women-only shortlist policy was torpedoed yesterday in the unlikely forum of a Leeds industrial tribunal.

A three-strong panel ruled that confining the chance to fight parliamentary seats to one sex was contrary to the 1975 Sex Discrimination Act, however well-intentioned the aim of increasing the total of women MPs. Of Labour's 270 MPs, only 38 are women.

The party is likely to appeal, but has frozen selection in nine seats with women-only shortlists until it receives the full written judgment in the next two weeks. Thirty-four women candidates have been chosen by the party under the policy. A question mark hangs over a further five constituencies — three in the North and Yorkshire region, one in South Wales and one in Leicester — where the process of selecting a woman candidate was due to start soon.

Successful candidates from all-secton shortlists:

Greater London
Westminster North Karen Buck
Michael & Merton S McDonagh
Stratford & Isleworth Ann Keen
South East
Crewey Laura Moffat
Bedford James Smith
Peaborough Victoria Stanger
North and Yorkshire
Don Valley Neil Munnister
Collier Valley Chris McCafferty
Sheffield South Diane Taylor
King's Cross David Dyer
South West
Plymouth Sutton Linda Gilroy
Fairfax & Camborne Candy Altherton
Forest of Dean Diana Orpin
South Frome Margaret
West Midlands
Edgbaston Gwenda Stewart
Stourbridge Debra Stopley
Burton James Dean
Bedford James Smith
Wolverhampton SW Jenny Jones
Central
Amber Valley Judy Maltby
Luton South Margaret Moran
Weymouth & Portland Victoria Johnson
Milton Keynes SW Phyllis Skirrow
Northampton North Sally Meikle
Chesham & Bucks Melissa
Lincoln Gillian Moran
Erminech Liz Stephens
North West
Liverpool East John Giddens
Liverpool West Peter Hain
Wales
Cardiff North David Davies
Princes Park North Gwyneth Jones
Conwy Gwyneth Jones
Scotland
Argyll and Bute Gordon



Harriet Harman, who backed the "Emily's List" campaign to get more seats for women, said she was bitterly disappointed.

The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats seized on the ruling as evidence of an "unfair" policy.

Tory deputy chairman Michael Trend said: "Labour's blatant exercise in sexism and political correctness has now been rejected by an industrial tribunal. They should reopen the selection in all those constituencies where all-women shortlists have been imposed."

Diana Maddock, Liberal Democrat women's affairs spokeswoman, said: "Parliament would greatly benefit from having more women, but the way to achieve that is through a programme of positive action rather than positive discrimination."

The two victors, long-standing Labour party members Peter Spence, aged 45, and Roger Dyer-Elliott, 42, were jubilant after the vindication of hours of research followed by patient argument at the tribunal.

Mr Jepson, of Feltham, Middlesex, was debarred from standing for the London seats of Brentford and Isleworth, and Regent's Park and Kensington North. Mr Dyer-Elliott, of Carlton in Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, was turned away from Keighley.

Sultan of Oman splashes out to tune of £500,000 for private concert by 101-strong British orchestra

Alan Watkins and Edward Pilkington

NOT everyone has the wherewithal to fly 101 members of the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra more than 1,000 miles in a personal jet at a cost of £500,000 just to enjoy a private concert. But, then,

not everyone is the Sultan of Oman.

Yesterday, members of the Manchester-based orchestra were still recuperating, having spent most of the past week in Muscat being lavishly entertained at the sultan's expense in a hotel described by one string player as "staggering in its luxury".

More tokens of the sultan's gratitude were bestowed on the conductors, Pascal Tortelier and Sir Edward Downes, and the pianist Kathryn Stott. The men received watches worth £8,000 each, and Miss Stott jewellery of equal value.

In return for such largesse, the BBC Philharmonic performed two concerts to mark

the anniversary of the coup that brought the sultan, Qaboos Bin Said, to power 25 years ago. That was an appropriate touch, perhaps, bearing in mind that the largely bloodless take-over had been orchestrated by the British.

The idea for the concerts was first mooted by the British ambassador to Oman,

Richard Muir. He raised it during a regular audience with the extravagantly rich ruler, who owns 750 houses and a £5 million manor house near Hamley-on-Thames.

Part of the programme of music by Beethoven, Rossini, Tchaikovsky and Elgar, selected by the sultan, has been preserved for posterity.

The BBC Philharmonic was asked to play the full national anthem of Oman.

At the sultan's request, the orchestra has made a tape of the anthem to replace the only previous recording in existence. The old 78 rpm was broken 40 years ago when the sultan's father accidentally sat on it.

Schools face court test

Parents will challenge new pupil selection rules, minister warned

John Carvel
Education Editor

STATE schools were warned last night that they could be taken to court by aggrieved parents if they change to the selective admissions system proposed yesterday by Gillian Shephard, the Education Secretary.

As the Guardian disclosed last week, her draft circular would scrap the guidance which has stopped most head teachers interviewing prospective pupils and their parents as a form of covert social screening.

The document would also remove the restriction limiting open selection by comprehensive schools to 10 per cent of places for pupils showing special aptitude for subjects such as music, art, drama, sport or technology.

It was now "likely to be possible" for any school to be able to choose about 15 per cent of its intake according to pupils' general ability, without reference to ability in any particular subject. Schools could switch to the new system without having to go through the "cumbersome" procedure of publishing their plans for local consultation, Mrs Shephard said.

She was warned by Local Schools Information, a council-funded advisory group, that this new guidance would clearly infringe legislation obliging schools to get government approval for any significant change of character.

"It is almost inevitable that schools adopting Mrs Shephard's approach will be taken to court by aggrieved parents," said Martin Rogers, the group's director. "We have taken legal advice and it is likely the parents would win."

"If such measures were introduced, alongside other proposals in the draft circular, grant-maintained schools would be free to introduce such changes without even the need to obtain the consent of the secretary of state."

There would be progressively reduced opportunities for parents to get their children into local schools.

Mrs Shephard's officials acknowledged the circular might have to be tested in the courts, but the Government's lawyers thought the increased selection would not amount to a significant change in the character of a school.

"The new circular has cut a swath through the forest of regulation and rigid bureaucracy surrounding admissions arrangements," Mrs Shephard said. All schools should be able to decide for themselves whether interviewing parents and children should play a part in the admission process.

Continued on page 2, col 3

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2 NEWS

Washington sketch

City in a whiter shade of pale



Jonathan Freedland

USUALLY people in Washington get caught in a "blizzard of allegations" or hit by a "storm of controversy". They demand a freeze in defence spending, and report a coolness in the electorate.

Well, now they have the real thing. Washington is covered in a blanket not of news coverage or official denials but of snow.

The record-breaking blizzard which started gusting across the eastern United States late on Saturday night has hit deepest in Washington, and the result is spectacular.

Now every house is the White House, rendered into various shades of pale from the largest fall of white stuff since 1922. Everywhere is bright, the snow so thick and the temperature so cold that it has refused to turn into the brown slush so characteristic of the British winter.

The streets have witnessed a pedestrian takeover, as people ignore the pavements and clear a path right down the middle of the road.

Once noisy thoroughfares are eerily quiet, as walkers bury their faces in scarves and stare only at their feet.

In a city renowned for its workaholics, some have tried everything to get to their desks. Whistling down 17th street yesterday morning was a man on cross-country skis, clutching a briefcase.

He had to swerve to avoid the Actura spinning, in the middle of the street. The driver had just got out and given up.

Most have not even tried. With snow falling at a rate of two inches an hour, local authorities urged people to stay home.

All government department meetings were closed, except the Supreme Court — too lofty to be deterred from its mission by a few snowflakes. The

funny thing was, this was the day the government was supposed to re-open after three weeks of budget wrangling had kept it shut.

Suddenly the workers who had complained so loudly seemed oddly content. "This is the kind of shutdown we have been waiting for," beamed Lars Hasselblad-Torres, one of a crowd on Calvert Street using the weather as a chance to dig out his favourite childhood toy: his toboggan.

Political life was frozen in its tracks. Newspapers were not delivered, speeches had to be cancelled. In one downtown office building, all the pressure groups and lobbying organisations were absent. Only the Guardian had shown up for work.

With all the airports closed, candidates shy of exposure were handed the perfect excuse. Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole was expected at a dinner in New Hampshire, whose primary is next month. He claimed snowbound and addressed the gathering by phone.

The news media have adapted quickly, offering the nation the diversion of usually dull White House correspondents appearing on air in an absurd array of anoraks and skiwear.

The real winners have been the suburban owners of four-wheel drive vehicles. All year round they suffer insults from envious friends. Now they have the last laugh. Yesterday local radio was asking all Range Rover owners to volunteer to take stranded doctors and nurses to work.

Restaurants hardly enough to stay open have done a grand trade. Eateries usually ignored were full yesterday, as people short of food had nowhere else to go (many of the 24-hour stores were boarded up). "Everyone gets in a really good mood," said Andy Stalal, owner of the Luna diner — heavily snow-free, underground by the Dupont Circle metro station. He had noticed how no-one was complaining about slow service. "Nothing matters on a snowy day."

Best of all are the nights. The snow is so white that it reflects the moonlight, enveloping the whole city in a clear, bright glow. Soon enough the politics will start up again, but for a few days Washington has looked like an enchanted city.

Rifkind to press China over orphan scandal

Andrew Higgins in Hong Kong

THE Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, will ask China today to respond to accusations of murderous neglect and abuse in state-run orphanages made in a documentary on Channel 4 tonight.

Speaking yesterday in Hong Kong on the eve of his departure for Beijing, Mr Rifkind brushed aside complaints from the Chinese embassy in London that the broadcast could poison diplomatic relations.

"We are not responsible for television programmes," he said, clearly frustrated that arguments between human rights groups and Beijing threaten to distract attention from preparations for Hong Kong's return to China on July 1 next year.

Tonight's Channel 4 documentary, Return to the Dying Rooms, draws on evidence compiled by the New York-based group Human Rights Watch in a lengthy report released on Sunday. China has rejected the report as a fabrication and took foreign journalists yesterday to a Shanghai orphanage cited by Human Rights Watch.

China will also be displeased by Mr Rifkind's remark at a lunch with British and other foreign businessmen that nobody in Hong Kong could be expected to welcome the territory's change of status from British colony to Special Administrative Region of China.

Asked about a survey which shows 70 per cent of the territory's population would prefer to see Hong Kong left unchanged, he said:



Malcolm Rifkind receives guidance as he addresses the menu at a topping-out ceremony for a new British consulate in Hong Kong

"I am surprised it is not 100 per cent because the status quo has been so successful."

An unprecedented question and answer session with Mr Rifkind in Hong Kong's Legislative Council yesterday was attended by only half of the assembly's 60 members, a measure of Britain's increasing irrelevance to the future. The members who did at-

tend grilled Mr Rifkind angrily about Britain's refusal to grant full British passports and demanded that London take action to block China's plans to scrap the elected assembly in 1997 and water down the Bill of Rights.

"Do you not have a conscience?" asked Emily Lau, an independent member. "Do you not think it is disgraceful to hand frightened people

over to a regime from which they fled and from which the British have given shelter for all these decades?"

"We all have consciences and we are all seeking to do the best we can in very difficult circumstances," Mr Rifkind replied. He said Britain could not rule out the possibility of taking China to an international court, but admitted that with the handover

only 539 days away, it had little leverage over Beijing.

After three years of polemics over political reforms introduced by Chris Patten, the governor of Hong Kong, there are some signs that Sino-British relations are improving. Mr Rifkind is due to meet President Jiang Zemin and Li Peng, the prime minister.

The row over orphanages, however, has introduced a

new source of friction. "People are concerned about the latest report and it's likely the subject will be mentioned," Mr Rifkind said yesterday.

"It is important to hear the Chinese government's point of view."

Gold calms China's nerves, page 7
Hugo Young, page 9

RAF Chinook heard flying to disaster

Lighthouse keeper tells of last seconds before crash killed 29

Erlend Clouston

A LIGHTHOUSE keeper yesterday described the last seconds of a Chinook helicopter flight before it plunged into a Scottish hillside killing a group of elite Northern Ireland security personnel.

David Murchie said he could not see the helicopter because of thick fog but during the two and a half minutes that he heard its flight it became apparent the giant craft did not have the altitude to clear the hilltop.

Mr Murchie was giving evidence on the opening day of

the fatal accident inquiry into the deaths of the 29 passengers and crew of the RAF helicopter, which had been on a flight from Belfast to a security conference at Fort George, near Inverness, when it hit a hill on the southern tip of the Mull of Kintyre on June 2, 1994.

Ten RUC special branch officers, nine army intelligence officers, six SAS agents, and four RAF crewmen were killed in one of the world's worst helicopter accidents.

Mr Murchie, a lighthouse keeper for 25 years and a flying enthusiast, told Paisley sheriff court he heard the rotors of the Mark II Chinook from his living room. He

strolled outside where he monitored the drone of the aircraft's approach for two and a half minutes.

He briefly lost the sound as the Chinook passed between him and an engine house. "I became concerned as I knew that he hadn't the altitude to clear the high ground," he said. Racing to the other side of his lighthouse, Mr Murchie heard "a dull thud" high up on the 1,400-metre fog-bound Ben na Lice on the Mull of Kintyre.

"It was followed by a whooshing noise; within three seconds there was silence," he said.

Questioned by John Mitchell, QC for the Crown, he said he had noted "nothing untoward" about the sounds coming from the Chinook's two engines.

Mr Mitchell asked whether

he thought the Chinook's height might have varied as it neared the Mull of Kintyre.

Mr Murchie said he was satisfied it had not. "I would have thought the helicopter was maintaining the same height all along."

The official Ministry of Defence report blamed senior pilot, Flight Lieutenant Jonathan Tapper, aged 28, and his co-pilot, Flight Lieutenant Richard Cook, aged 30, for the crash, but their families are disputing this verdict.

Pressed by Aidan O'Neill, representing the family of Flight Lieutenant Tapper, Mr Murchie agreed the fog might have muffled the sound of the Chinook.

"This is the first opportunity for the people most affected by the crash to ask the questions they want asked," said Aidan Canavan, a solicitor representing the relatives of the passengers.

The helicopter's manufacturers, Boeing and the Ministry of Defence are also represented at the inquiry, whose findings will play a large part in determining levels of compensation.

The Ministry has been criticised for indicating that the maximum individual payout



David Murchie, who gave evidence to the inquiry

will be £250,000. The pilots' families hope to demonstrate there was some link between the disaster and the mechanical and computer malfunctions which had earlier forced testing on Mark II Chinooks to be suspended.

Hector Lamont, an assistant lighthouse keeper, told the inquiry he had noticed an orange flash in the rear view mirror of his Land Rover as he returned to the headland after a shopping trip.

At first he had thought it was the helicopter's navigation light. But a few minutes later he met Mr Murchie who told him the aircraft had crashed.

Three Glasgow university pathologists said the victims would have died instantaneously from multiple injuries. Tests on both pilots showed no evidence of heart disease, drugs or alcohol.

A radar controller at Belfast airport read out a transcript of the last message received from the helicopter as it left the military zone surrounding RAF Aldergrove.

"We now have the zone boundary going on route — good day," the unnamed pilot radioed to Sinead Swift. The message was timed at 5.46pm, 10 minutes before the Chinook hit the remote Kintyre peninsula.

Ms Swift explained that the aircraft was operating under visual flight rules which give the pilot discretion as to his aircraft's height. If he had been using instruments, the Chinook would have been ordered to fly at "at least 3,000 feet, depending on terrain".

The inquiry, which is expected to last up to four weeks, continues today.

First night

Backstage rows, on-stage realism

Michael Billington

La Bohème Opera Bastille, Paris

JONATHAN Miller's new production of La Bohème at the Bastille has not been without its problems. Roberto Alagna, the star-tenor who sings Rodolfo in one of the two separate casts, last week caused a storm by refusing to take a curtain call on account of "differences with the artists."

He went on to claim that he will never sing at the Bastille again. But, whatever the temperamental problems backstage, the old piece comes across — certainly with the alternative cast that I saw — with remarkable freshness.

Puccini's opera is, of course, set in Paris in 1830. Miller updates it to roughly 1980. Posters of Jean Harlow in Hell's Angels and of René Clair's Sous les toits de Paris decorate the walls of the Bohemian garret, and Dante Ferretti's designs are clearly based on the realistic photographs of André Kertész: the Café Momus is a slightly shabby, sub-fusc affair, and the street-walls in the third act are decorated with peeling pictures of a famous silhouetted Dubonnet advertisement.

As Baz Luhrmann's 1950s-set version, shown on TV over Christmas, proved, La Bohème is an opera that can withstand updating. But for the first two acts Miller's production is slightly hung fire.

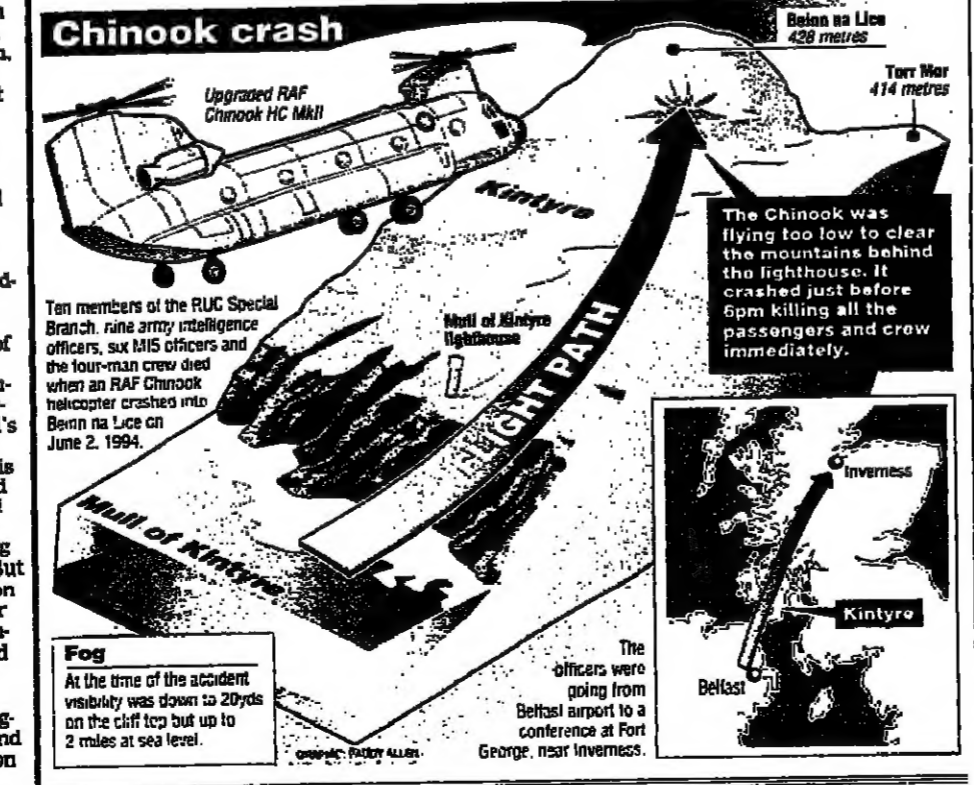
Crucial plot points, such as the fact that Rodolfo deliberately hides Mimi's latchkey, got lost on the large Bastille stage. And the prevailing grey-

ness of the costumes at the Café Momus meant that the principals were submerged in the general melee: only with the arrival of Valerie Millor's Musetta, hoisting her skirt up her thighs to attract Marcello's attention, did the production begin to match the music's exuberance.

But Miller's realistic emphasis on the poverty, cold and deprivation of Bohemian life pays superb dividends in her third act. His strength, as always, lies in individual psychology; and the third-act encounter of Rodolfo and Mimi in a freezing suburban street reeking of decay was filled with exactly the right mixture of guilt, sadness and hopeless optimism.

In particular, the Chilean soprano, Cristina Gallardo-Domas, showed she is a world-class Mimi not just in her sweetness of tone but in her sudden shocked awareness of her impending death. The final act was also overwhelming in the characters' embarrassment in the face of Mimi's mortality.

Miller's view of the opera is deliberately unromantic and low-key; even the occasional raffish outbursts of high spirits seem a way of keeping poverty and misery at bay. But although I feel the production would benefit from a smaller house, it was sensitively conducted by Louis Lancre and well sung throughout. Roberto Alagna may be no Alagna but he brought a ringing Italian tone to Rodolfo and Gallardo-Domas, who goes on to sing the role at the Met, endowed Mimi with a Butterfly-like poignancy and grace. A good occasion, clearly enjoyed by a packed house.



New school selection rules face court test

Continued from page 1

Estelle Morris, Labour's education spokeswoman, said the Government was "undermining parental choice by allowing local authorities to vet parents' and pupils' rather than letting parents pick schools."

Peter Smith, general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, said the proposals ran directly counter to the Prime Minister's vision of a classless society. "It is breathtaking that

John Major of all people should be backing something that will almost certainly turn into selection by social class."

The result was tantamount to reintroduction of the 11-plus by the back door, he said. Doug McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said the proposals were a sop to the Government's hard-line supporters. "They will further encourage schools to choose parents rather than parents choosing schools," he said.

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of School-

masters/Union of Women Teachers, said the announcement "harked selection on social grounds, accent and the size of the family car. Perhaps it is a machievellian attempt to make the 11-plus appear attractive in comparison."

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said Mrs Shephard was hitting the wrong target.

"She should have enabled popular and oversubscribed schools to expand to meet demand rather than concentrate on the needs of the few to the potential detriment of the many."

Advertisement for 'The life of Jesus after the Crucifixion' by Barbara Thiering. Text: 'CAN YOU HANDLE THE TRUTH BEHIND THE BOOK OF REVELATIONS? BARBARA THIERING JESUS OF THE APOCALYPSE'. Description: 'The life of Jesus after the Crucifixion is described, as is the reality represented by such symbols as the Beast whose number is 666, The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, and many more. Jesus of the Apocalypse is a breathtaking scholarly masterpiece no-one can afford to miss.' Price: £12.95. Publisher: Doubleday.

سونا من الاصل

Labour leader ends Asian tour with praise from Lee Kuan Yew but chorus of mockery from Tories

Blair a Singapore success

Nicholas Cumming-Bruce in Singapore and Michael White

TONY Blair flew back to London from his whirlwind Asian tour last night pursued by praise from the creators of Singapore's economic miracle and condemnation for his vision of a "stakeholder society" from the self-styled creators of Britain's.

as he awaited Mr Blair's arrival for a dinner in the colonial finery of Raffles Hotel to mark the end of the Labour leader's visit. "He is young, energetic, doing well within the Labour Party and the country."

The comments from an Asian leader, who has retained an almost permanent grip on power for 30 years, gave an extra fillip to the leader of a party that until recently seemed condemned to almost permanent opposition. But Mr Lee warned that what he called Britain's natural party of reform would take time to achieve its goals.

Mr Blair, who has spent five days trying to impress on Asia the new thinking in Labour, told reporters that Mr Lee's success in building a society encompassing all its citizens "very much reflects my own political philosophy."

Warming words from a 'nasty little man'

On Mrs Thatcher, 1985: "The refusal to bend, to temporise, to be deflected from your declared objectives, have become your hall-marks of firm government."

To Harold Wilson, Prime Minister, 1965: "I have had my fill of the sordid and mor-

bid press campaign against you... the press have deliberately worked up hysteria amongst the PLP, until they look like Gadertine swine plunging headlong to perdition"

On the socialist state: "We have studiously avoided its

practices. We saw how a great people reduced themselves to mediocrity by levelling down."

On Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping: "A great man."

Henry Kissinger on Lee: "A nasty little man."

ated the real stakeholder society in the 1980s when they sold shares, utilities and council houses.

"Labour have fought us every step of the way. Who would be their stakeholders? The trade unions and the left wing-dominated single issue pressure groups," asked the Deputy Prime Minister.

Mr Portillo said: "If this is his new idea, he's 16 years out of date."

Mr Lee appeared to have little doubt that Mr Blair is heading for No. 10. But likening Britain to a 500,000-ton oil tanker that could not be easily turned, he thought change needed time. "If he can within two election terms get it on course, then whoever takes over will get a much more competitive Britain."

Leader comment, page 8; Blair comment, page 9

Given Singapore's social authoritarianism, which coexists with a higher per capita income than Britain's, such remarks may further alarm Labour traditionalists.

Last night most remained quiet, leaving John Prescott to defend his leader's battle to "present ideas for discussion" while ministers abused them. Mr Prescott's predecessor as deputy leader, Margaret

Beckett, also supported Mr Blair's remarks.

In his keynote speech, followed by a dinner attended by Singapore's political elite, Mr Blair placed long-term unemployment at the top of his agenda, with a pledge to bring back into mainstream society people who felt alienated.

Mr Lee, who came to admire Mrs Thatcher after Labour's reformism turned

sour, suggested Mr Blair could turn out to be her natural successor. The role of reformer probably came more easily to him "because he is in the right party to bring about reforms."

As ministers in London struggled to obey John Major's edict to stop squabbling in public, both Mr Hesseine and Michael Portillo said that the Conservatives had cre-



Going... In the seven-part BBC series, Floyd on France



Going... In Floyd on Britain and Ireland for the BBC



Gone... Mr Floyd, relaxing in traditional style on holiday

TV chef Floyd in a stew as receivers called in

Business runs up £500,000 debts for man dogged by crises, reports Geoffrey Gibbs

FLOYD'S Inn (Sometimes) say the signs on publicity blubs for the Maltsters, the renowned pub and restaurant complex overlooking Bow Creek on the tidal reaches of the River Dart in South Devon.

Not yesterday it wasn't. While TV chef Keith Floyd was holidaying abroad with his new wife, men with briefcases, tape measures and calculators were crawling over the property in the village of Tuckenhay trying to put a value on the business which has fallen into receivership.

It is the latest in a series of financial and personal disasters that have left the chef with egg, scrambled, all over his face.

Mr Floyd, who became a household name through television programmes such as *Floyd on Fish*, took over the Maltsters, then an ordinary riverside pub, in 1989 and has spent heavily developing it into one of only about 12 restaurants in the UK to boast the coveted Michelin red M rating.

Menu Gourmand, prepared by head chef Christophe Vincent and his staff, offers delicacies such as



The Maltsters restaurant in South Devon, visited by the receivers yesterday

lobster capuccino and saddle of roe deer at £48 a head. A more modest four course set meal at the pub's "canteen" costs £27, while the chef's special of fillet of beef in truffle sauce can be had for £18 and house champagne for £27 a bottle.

One occasional customer described the receivership as a great shame, saying

that Mr Floyd, who was often seen mingling with customers in the bar, had added a sparkle of glamour to the place. "The food was excellent. I liked his innovative menus."

While the revamped inn and restaurant have been a gastronomic and social success, heavy investment in redeveloping the pub and a

former winery on the site into a French-style *auberge* left the business in hot financial water. Mr Floyd had previously owned several small restaurants in Bristol but ran into financial problems with them.

A man of robust views, he has never balked at admitting his failures, whether in marriage or business.

Last year he said: "Why can't people be honest? I'm always honest. In fact, I wish I could be a lot more dishonest sometimes as everyone takes advantage of me. I've got massive debts and people are always wanting 10 or 20 per cent of everything I have. Lawyers and accountants always add an extra nought

for me. Why? Because I'm called Floyd or something." Duncan Swift, the accountant leading the receivership team from corporate recovery experts Grant Thornton, said yesterday that debts were "£500,000 or more".

He emphasised that the inn remained open and that he was looking to sell the business as a going concern. But he could not rule out the possibility of reducing the scope of the operation and its 15-strong workforce.

"The company failed principally because of trading losses incurred during the development phase of the business," Mr Swift said. Management efforts to turn the business round had failed as funds ran out.

Mr Floyd, aged 52, who married fourth wife Teresa Smith, a food stylist, last year, is expected to be abroad for about three weeks. It is understood he asked his bankers to appoint receivers to run the business late last week.

Whatever happens, the man who has adorned himself to millions of amateur cooks is unlikely to give up his trademark — the quick stirrup.

He once said: "I don't drink any more or any less than anyone else I know. In the last 10 years, I have written 14 books, made nine major television series, written countless articles and run a pub full-time. Alcoholics can't do that kind of workload."

Mob fury after plane crash kills 250 in Zaire

Matthew Testevlin in Kinshasa

AN ANGRY crowd tried to lynch four Russian crew members after a cargo plane they were piloting crashed yesterday into a crowded market in Kinshasa, the capital of Zaire, killing more than 250 people.

Zaire's state prosecutor, Mukenge Bisumbule, said police took the Russians, who survived the crash with only minor injuries, into custody after saving them from the mob at a city clinic. Police were looking for two other crew members, a Ukrainian and a Zairean.

Most of the victims of the crash were women and children in the crowded city cen-

tre market of corrugated iron and wooden shacks. "We found 217 bodies at the market," said Vincent Nicod of the International Committee of the Red Cross. "I think there are 32 more bodies at hospital morgues in the town. So I don't think there are less than 250 people in all."

Witnesses saw rescuers pull bodies from the wreck of the Antonov aircraft and the market's shacks. Many of the bodies were mutilated.

The plane, which had taken off from nearby Ndolo airport, ploughed through the market for more than 100 yards before it came to a halt, belching flames and clouds of black smoke. A fire crew from Ndolo tried to dampen the flames.

Red Cross workers joined

soldiers and local volunteers. Wearing plastic bags on their hands, they picked up bodies and severed limbs. The exact number of wounded will be difficult to determine.

Gothie Mukoka, who was at the airport when the plane took off, said: "The aircraft tried to take off but it only got a few metres off the ground, then it disappeared and there was an explosion." Airport sources said the plane belonged to Africa Airlines, a private Zairean company.

A Zairean air force colonel who was also at the airport said the aircraft appeared to be overloaded.

As evening fell over Kinshasa, a crumbling city of 6 million, calls went out on radio and television for people to donate blood. — Reuter.

Maxwell jury sent to hotel after failing to reach verdict

Dan Atkinson

THE Maxwell trial jury was sent to an hotel last night having failed to reach verdicts after an afternoon of deliberations. The seven women and five men will resume their work this morning.

Earlier the judge, Lord Justice Phillips, concluded his 3½-day summing up on Day 12 of the trial. He said the jury had to be certain of the dishonesty of the defendants before convicting them; suspicion that the men had probably committed the offences would not be enough.

To help them, he gave the jurors two questionnaires, each containing seven questions with a built-in "fail-safe". This unusual aid pro-

vides for yes/no answers at each stage; should a juror answer no to any question, he must acquit on that charge.

Lord Justice Phillips concluded his review with the case of Ian Maxwell who, he said, was in a very different position from the other accused because of his lack of involvement in the financial affairs of the Maxwell group. He is charged jointly with his brother Kevin and financial adviser Larry Trachtenberg of conspiring to misuse £22 million of shares belonging to pension funds as security for loans to the Maxwell empire.

The judge said Ian Maxwell "did have a duty to consider the documents before he signed them", but he was entitled to rely on information from fellow directors.

All three deny the offence. Kevin further denies conspiring with his late father Robert to misuse £100 million of share-sale proceeds belonging to pensioners.

The Crown has alleged no reasonable person could have thought it was in the interests of pensioners to use their assets to support the Maxwell empire during its final months of existence at the end of 1981. The defendants, he said, must have known they were acting dishonestly.

Lord Justice Phillips told jurors it would not be enough for them to consider the use of pension assets to be dishonest; they would have to decide whether the defendants, immersed in the culture of the Maxwell group, thought it was dishonest.

The best stories are in The Guardian

December 18

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Selection in schools to return

Followed up by: Times, Daily Mail, Independent, Financial Times, BBC TV

UK bows to Saudis

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Arms bosses' secret plot

Followed up by: Times, Sunday Telegraph, BBC TV, BBC Radio, Independent, Sunday Times

The best writers are in The Guardian

isaster

HANDLE BEHIND THE RELATIONS? HIERING APOCALYPSE

4 BRITAIN

Shops lose in lottery madness

John Mullin

RETAIL sales will be hit this month after last week's lottery madness, possibly leading to another interest rate cut, according to economists.

Nine out of 10 adults tried for the £42 million double roll-over record prize, spending £127 million on tickets, more than twice the usual weekly total. Scratch card sales were down by £5 million because economists put the impact on January's retail sales at 0.6 per cent. But prize money would be ploughed back into spending, and that would reduce the overall impact to 0.3 per cent, said David Mackie, UK economist at JP Morgan.

Another economist, Don Smith, at HSBC Markets, suggested the figure might be 0.4 per cent.

National Lottery staff were last night still waiting to hear from one of the three winning ticket holders who each scooped just over £14 million. The winner is losing interest at the rate of £2,000 a day. The identities of the two who have come forward are being withheld at their request.

A spokeswoman for Camelot, the lottery operators, said: "I would have imagined by now that most people would have checked their tickets — we don't know if they're just playing it cool." She said counselling was available for all winners.

Most jackpot winners contact Camelot within 24 hours. But, as well as the £14 million winner, there were 18 out of 53 people who had won £164,747 who had still to get in touch.

They had five of the winning balls — 2,3,4,13,42,44, and

the bonus ball 24. The Low Pay Unit, which campaigns for the poor, called yesterday for advertisements to carry a warning reminding players the odds were stacked against them.

Chris Pond, the charity's director, said the lottery was becoming the only way that many people on low incomes would ever fulfill their aspirations. They were spending money they could ill afford on long-odds gambles.

Mr Pond believed some would suffer from long-term mental health problems as they saw their dreams of escape from poverty shattered week after week.

Households earning less than £5,500 a year spend £1.98 a week on average, according to National Lottery figures, although overall spending doubled last week.

Mr Pond said millions of the 14 million in households bringing in less than £7,000 — half the average income — were likely to have played.

"It's a very long shot, but they're in circumstances where people are finding it more and more difficult to make ends meet and dream of winning the big prize or any prize. We're concerned that very substantial amounts of low income budgets are going in that direction."

In a television poll, more than three-quarters of BBC's Newround viewers believed the £42 million jackpot was too high.

● Ali Hirji, a kebab shop owner, was jailed for six months at Wood Green crown court in London yesterday after he used two tickets stuck together with sellotape in a fraudulent attempt to claim a £150,000 prize.

Consumers splash out, page 12

Psychotic murderer gave up after finding home-made ladder was too heavy to carry



Reginald Wilson... 'exceptionally dangerous' prisoner

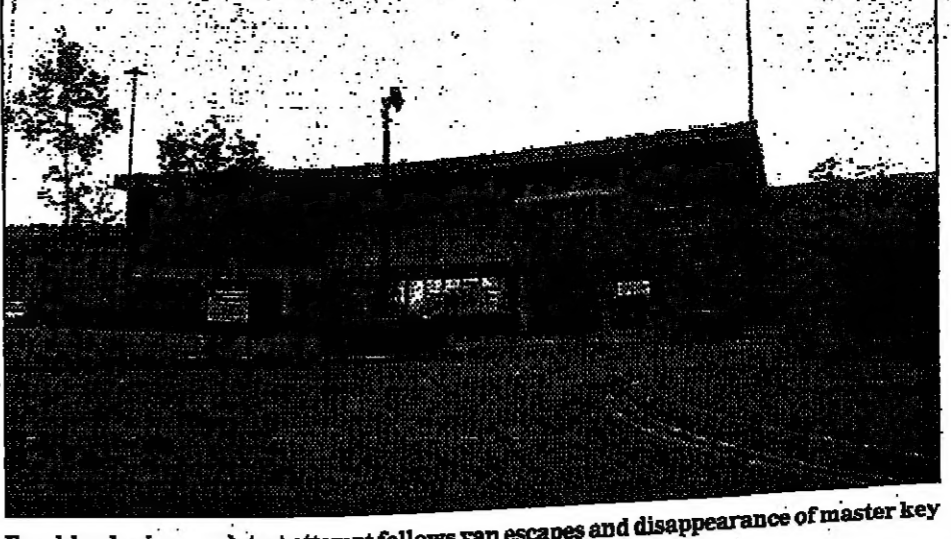
Prison inquiry after killer's escape attempt

Martin Wainwright

AN INQUIRY is under way at an accident-prone jail after a seriously disturbed killer almost managed to break out.

Murderer Reginald Wilson, who stabbed to death a medical consultant, was foiled when his home-made ladder proved too heavy to carry to the perimeter fence at Frankland prison, Co Durham.

The incident follows the successful escape of lifer Alan Byrne and armed robber Thomas Clarke from a Frankland prison van on a visit to a cancer clinic in



Frankland prison... latest attempt follows van escapes and disappearance of master key

Newcastle. Shortly afterwards all locks at the prison were replaced after a master key could not be found.

The Prison Service confirmed yesterday that Wilson had managed to cut through cell bars and had successfully hidden the bulky ladder made out of pieces of furniture. His escape attempt was only discovered when he gave himself up to officers after realising that he could not make it to Frankland's high outer walls with the ladder undetected.

Wilson, aged 31, has been classified as an "exceptionally dangerous" prisoner since 1991, when he was jailed for life for clubbing to death Teesside skin specialist David Birkett, who treated him as a young child.

The trial heard that Mr Birkett was selected from a list of victims.

Wilson was trapped by a fingerprint left through a small hole in one of the gloves he had worn for the murder, when he hit Mr Birkett 17 times over the head with a hammer after entering his Middlesbrough home disguised as a motorcycle courier.

The trial also heard that Wilson, who has been medically categorised as psychotic, had previously tried to kill a police officer by luring him to a flat with a bogus 999 call. But the constable was suspicious and while he waited for back-up support, Wilson fled with a firearm through a back door.

A Prison Service spokesman said yesterday: "We do not want to disclose details for fear of encouraging further incidents of this kind." But he added that "because of the recent history involving Frankland," Bill Abbott, the Prison Service head of security and former governor of Fentonville, was carrying out an investigation.

Bypass protest on battle alert

Alex Bellis

PROTESTERS were expecting the first skirmishes in the battle over the Newbury bypass today as they went on standby last night to mobilise almost 2,000 supporters.

Friends of the Earth claimed it had information that the first bulldozers would be moving in at 7am today. A spokesman said that the positioning of 400 security guards in a warehouse near Didcot yesterday was a sign that construction work was due to begin.

Dozens of protesters are living in tents and treehouses along the nine-mile route of the bypass, which is scheduled to take two-and-a-half years to complete.

A High Court application to evict them from their camps was delayed for two weeks last Thursday, but the road-building company can legally start work on other areas along the route.

Friends of the Earth said it had trailed 400 security guards in nine coaches yesterday from London. They will be used to protect construction workers and equipment.

Reliance, the security firm contracted to the bypass, said it was bringing in experienced officers for Newbury.

As soon as protesters spot the guards and construction workers approaching, they plan to call an office in Newbury which will then activate the "bulldozer pledge phone tree", containing the names of 1,800 local people.

All these will be asked to go to the site immediately to try to block the work.

Susan Millington, of Newbury Friends of the Earth, said: "We're looking forward to meeting the security people on our side of the story. I am sure that many of them will realise that £3.50 per hour is not sufficient reason to play an active role in such large-scale environmental destruction."

Nuclear deterrent aimed at Third World dictators

David Fairhall
Defence Correspondent

BRTAIN has deployed a new nuclear deterrent — submarine missiles with just one warhead, intended to strike fear into any Third World dictator tempted to try nuclear blackmail.

The second of the Royal Navy's Trident submarines, HMS Victorious, slipped away from its Clydebase base on Sunday evening, believed to be carrying single-warhead "sub-strategic" ballistic missiles, as well as the multi-warhead variety for which it was designed during the cold war.

The Ministry of Defence would confirm neither the precise content of its 16 missile tubes nor that it was heading for an Atlantic patrol. But the Government has previously disclosed that Victorious would be the first to deploy the new form of deterrent.

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament condemned the deployment as "a dangerous turn for the worse". The campaign's chairwoman Janet Bloomfield argued that it ushered in a new era of gunboat diplomacy.

"The trend in nuclear weapons and policy is towards smaller, more flexible and highly accurate weapons the Government believes will be more acceptable to use", she claimed. "It is a dangerous turn for the worse in terms of defence strategy and makes the likelihood of nuclear weapons being used — perhaps initially as a warning shot — all the greater."

For the MoD accountants, fitting Trident with sub-strategic weapons was also a convenient way of avoiding the £2.3 billion cost of providing the RAF with a new air-launched nuclear missile to replace its obsolete WE-177 freefall bombs — which are themselves being withdrawn.

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PM plan for tests at five is shelved

Donald MacLeod
Education Correspondent

TESTS for five-year-olds — one of the key education policies being promoted by John Major — have been effectively shelved until after the general election.

With the nursery vouchers scheme struggling to get off the ground, the slippage of tests to measure the effectiveness of pre-school education comes as a further embarrassment and follows infighting between Downing Street and the Department for Education and Employment over the purpose and nature of the proposed tests.

Mr Major has been pressing for tests but the department, reflecting the views of many educationalists, felt that small children entering school should be assessed by their teachers over a period of time, rather than face being labelled failures at the age of five.

Sir Ron Dearing, the Government's chief curriculum adviser, concluded that testing of the kind wanted by the Prime Minister could not go ahead until universal nursery education for four-year-olds had been set up through the vouchers scheme.

Today ministers will admit that the potentially controversial introduction of "baseline" testing will not be introduced until September 1998. A pilot nursery voucher scheme is due to run in four authori-

ties from September, and ministers intend this to be succeeded by a national scheme from September 1997. These five-year-olds and "rising fives" could then be tested when they started school a year later.

Baseline assessment, introduced by Wandsworth in 1992 and taken up on a large scale by Birmingham, could be employed whatever the result of the general election. Labour is also interested in the idea, but is likely to put the emphasis on teacher assessment. Baseline results could be compared to tests at age seven to measure the progress of children at different infant schools.

Today's announcement about "learning outcomes" for nursery schooling follows wide consultation by the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority. Details of nursery vouchers and a "light touch" inspection system for nurseries and playgroups will also be outlined.

Ministers will also be relieved not to be imposing a new set of tests on teachers at a time when they have been promised stability on the national curriculum, and testing and the size of reception classes is a political issue.

Tim Brighouse, Birmingham's director of education, said baseline assessment had been introduced with the cooperation of teachers and was used for diagnostic purposes, not for league tables.

The results could provide useful information about best practice in schools and there could be great benefits in a national system, provided it was sensitively introduced.

"The dangers are that we all get into league tables without any understanding of different circumstances," he said. Teachers could also fall into the trap of low expectations for some children.

Wandsworth carries out simple tests on reception children in which they are shown pictures and asked to circle certain objects, but teachers also compile their own assessment of each child over the course of the first half term.

Margaret Robinson, early years adviser in the London borough of Lambeth, was unable to compare the baseline results to the national curriculum tests at age seven.



Sir Ron Dearing... priority given to nursery vouchers

Bad exam results drove school to start selection

Donald MacLeod
on a move away from parental choice in education

APPALLING examination results drove Brian Jones to go through the "long and tortuous" business of asking the Government for permission to introduce selection into his south London grant-maintained school.

Ironically Archbishop Tenison's School, a Church of England boys' comprehensive overlooking the Oval cricket ground, has reverted to a version of the banding system operated by the Conservatives' bete noire, the Inner London Education Authority.

In September more than 200 boys were tested in literacy, numeracy and non-verbal reasoning for the 92 places. This year the school will admit pupils in the proportion of 40 above average ability, 40 average and 20 below average.

Mr Jones said the school's intake had become skewed towards lower ability pupils because it had been based on social factors, church membership and proximity rather than ability. Now it was receiving applications from neighbouring boroughs like Lambeth, Wandsworth and Lewisham.

"Over a period of five years it should make an enormous difference to our examination results," Mr Jones said. Last year only one boy in the fifth form was of above average ability, and the proportion

gaining five A to C grades was 1 per cent. Next year 37 boys in "band 1" would be entering the school in September. The school was still a comprehensive taking the full ability range.

In contrast Durham Johnston School returns excellent results at both GCSE and A level but the headteacher, John Dunford, opposes selection.

"This is a move towards schools selecting pupils and away from parents choosing schools. Parental choice has always been a fiction. For oversubscribed schools parental preference cases are of little use if a child does not fulfil the admissions criteria."

His comprehensive school serves a mixture of rundown former mining villages and the prosperous "leafy" suburbs. Going to a school in the area would hit other schools in the neighbourhood.

"The vast majority of headteachers would agree with that. Only a small number may be driven to do it by the competitive situation in their own neighbourhoods. The new regulations will be little used," he predicted.

Critics of the partial selection proposed by the Government argue it will increase the polarisation between schools by weeding out potential trouble-makers through parental interviews. Most heads say their problems are caused by a very small percentage of their intake.

History of selection

1944: Rab Butler's Education Act establishes system of grammar schools taking the top 20 per cent of pupils tested at 11-plus and secondary moderns the rest.

1965: Labour establishes national policy for comprehensives but left to local authorities to decide on form. Some Conservative-run councils resisted.

Early 1970s: Margaret

Thatcher as education secretary oversees steep decline in grammar school numbers.

1982: Education secretary John Patten permits schools to select up to 10 per cent of pupils on basis of ability or aptitude for music, sport etc.

1986: Gillian Shephard extends limit to 15 per cent and eases paperwork needed by grant-maintained schools to change admissions.



John Cody, great grandson of Sam Cody, the wild west showman and flight pioneer, with a collection of his ancestor's memorabilia to be auctioned at Sotheby's PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN SMITH

Europhile MPs fight back in propaganda war

Michael White
Political Editor

SENIOR Conservative MPs and MEPs yesterday reopened their party's wounds on Europe when they joined like-minded Labour and Liberal Democrat colleagues to promote the case among the "Euro-phobic" British for closer EU integration and a single currency.

The veteran European Movement published the findings of a Gallup poll suggesting that 56 per cent of voters still favour closer co-operation among EU countries, with Britain playing a leading

role. But voters remained un- happily ignorant of the issue, the group said.

Some 56 per cent of the 805 people polled described their knowledge of the EU as poor or very poor. Only 8 per cent said their knowledge was good or very good.

The movement also claimed that the poll showed the public remaining broadly pro-European, with Europhiles outnumbering sceptics by three to one. Sixty-one per cent want to keep options open on joining a single currency — John Major's own strategy.

Against the 56 per cent favouring closer co-operation, some 19 per cent disagreed and 23 per cent were neutral.

But the Euro-sceptics appeared to be winning the propaganda war, as 46 per cent of the people polled had heard more of the arguments against a single currency than in favour, and only 18 per cent had heard more of the positive case.

"This survey shows there is all to play for in the debate about Europe," said the movement's chairman, Giles Radice, Labour MP for Durham North. "The British aren't Euro-sceptic; they're simply Euro-baffled. Despite the barrage of anti-European propaganda, most people are still prepared to support the idea of closer co-operation."

Backed by leading Tories, including the former minister Edwin Currie and — offstage from yesterday's Westminster press conference — Sir Edward Heath, the MEP Lord Plumb and Sir Leon Brittan, the UK's senior European commissioner, they signalled their determination to fight the Euro-sceptics in promoting the single currency, the euro, in the months ahead.

Asked if she would put the European cause ahead of party unity, Mrs Currie, MP for South Derbyshire, replied: "What is most important to me is the welfare of my country" — a calculation tied to membership of a single currency if one is launched, as planned, on January 1, 1999.

Since Mr Major had appealed to his party barely 24 hours earlier to close ranks and stave off election defeat — "this election is there to be won" — Tory sceptics took it as an attack, at a time when they are angry at hints that Mr Major has decided against publishing a European policy white paper ahead of the "Maastricht II" inter-governmental conference due to open in March.

It coincided with a renewed spat over the defection to the Liberal Democrats of Emma Nicholson, the European Movement's vice-chairman, in part over Europe. Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary, complained from Tokyo

on Radio 4's Today programme that a whispering campaign had been "whipped up against me" after his criticism of the defector.

Labour's Peter Mandelson, MP for Hartlepool, plus leading Lib Dem Charles Kennedy, MP for Ross, Cromarty and Skye, and former party candidate Alan Watson, were careful at the press conference to stress the need for economic convergence and the national interest in deciding on a single currency.

Being outside it would be "like Manhattan trying to run a different dollar from the United States," said Mr Kennedy, who also endorsed calls for a referendum.

Arms dumped in wrong spot on seabed Bank fraud 'brain' jailed

Survey shows pipeline disturbed surplus weapons washed ashore

David Fairhall
Defence Correspondent

AN UNDERWATER survey of the vast munitions disposal ground between Scotland and Ireland has disclosed that many explosives were wrongly dumped in shallow inshore waters.

The results of the survey, conducted by the Scottish Office Fisheries department, will confirm fears that a recently-laid British gas pipeline has disturbed thousands of dangerous phosphorus cylinders being washed up along the Ayrshire coast and the Mull of Kintyre — one of which injured a four-year-old boy.

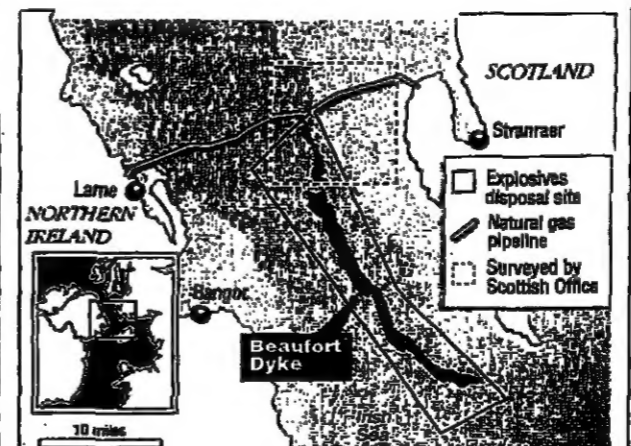
Scottish Office minister Lord Lindsay said yesterday there would be no conclusive evidence until the results of the full study were known. "But in all probability we acknowledge there could be a link between the two."

The minister added that although the discarded munitions were not found to have endangered the public or contaminated marine life, lessons learned from the survey would be applied to future offshore operations.

Hundreds of thousands of tons of surplus war munitions were dumped between 1945 and 1976 around the deep underwater trench known as Beaufort's Dyke, between Northern Ireland and the Mull of Galloway.

Incomplete records held by the Ministry of Defence show the munitions included rockets filled with phosphene gas, high explosive bombs, mortar smoke bombs, incendiary small arms ammunition and machine gun ammunition from captured German U-boats.

Underwater television and sonar pictures confirmed what fishermen have long been telling a sceptical Ministry of Defence — that on many occasions ships in a



hurry to get home dumped their explosive cargo in relatively shallow water before they reached the deep trench intended for it.

Pictures displayed at yesterday's Scottish Office and MoD press conference in Aberdeen show examples of the ammunition boxes, crates and individual munitions strewn on the seabed across the gas pipeline's route. They include objects of the same

size and shape as the phosphorus cylinders washed ashore, but none of these could be positively identified.

The 4,000 or so phosphorus cylinders that have recently been washed ashore look like hollow bones or discarded paint rollers. Under water they are inert, but in the air they smoulder or burn.

Two Scottish Labour MPs, George Foulkes and Brian Donohoe, gatecrashed the

press conference, protesting that it was being held "at the wrong time, in the wrong place, and by the wrong people". They demanded that further surveys be carried out closer to the Scottish coast to allay public concern.

Mr Foulkes was particularly concerned that seabed sediments should be investigated, along with recent reports of unexploded British explosives. Mr Donohoe claimed munitions may have been dumped only a half mile away from the shoreline.

In London, the shadow defence secretary, David Clark, condemned the Beaufort's Dyke survey as "too little, too late". "After a year of trying to sweep this issue under the carpet the Government should have learned that complacency and half-measures are not the solution," he said.

British Gas said in a statement that work on the offshore section of the Scotland-Northern Ireland pipeline "had been conducted in strict accordance with procedures agreed with the Department of Trade and Industry, the Health and Safety Executive and the Ministry of Defence".

Bank fraud 'brain' jailed

A FRAUDSTER who breached National Westminster Bank's security system was told by a judge yesterday that if his sentence was based on the number of offences he had committed he "would not live long enough to complete it".

Michael Boparan, aged 30, who had fallen in business, masterminded a "highly professional" £1.3 million international bank fraud to maintain his millionaire lifestyle. He was jailed for five years at Southwark crown court.

With the help of four young insiders who gave him highly confidential information, he had forged gold and platinum credit cards and then plundered high spending corporate and individual accounts.

Judge Michael Harris called Boparan arrogant and said the swindle had netted him more than £1 million. He had corrupted others, including four clerks, three of whom were also sentenced.

Policeman failed to report hanged girl was suicide risk

A POLICEMAN who arrested a teenager after she twice tried to throw herself from a second-storey window admitted to a fatal accident inquiry yesterday that he had not warned colleagues she could be a suicide risk.

Two weeks later, Kelly Holland, aged 17, was found hanged in her cell at Cornton Vale prison, near Stirling.

PC Stewart Smith, aged 24, was giving evidence to the inquiry into the deaths of Ms Holland and fellow inmate Arlene Elliot, also 17, who were found hanged in their cells within four days of each other in June.

He said he arrested Ms Holland for breach of the peace after she twice tried to jump out of the window of an empty flat in Hamilton.

He said she could have been trying to kill herself — or she could have been trying to escape from men who had raided the flat to try to stop illicit parties.

PC Smith said Ms Holland, of Hamilton, was drunk and abusive when he arrested her. She was taken to East Kilbride police station because there were no women officers on duty in Hamilton.

"I told the sergeant that in my opinion this was just drunken conduct rather than a serious suicide attempt," he said.

However, the custody officer, Sergeant Fergus McCallum, told the inquiry he would have called a doctor if he had known exactly what Ms Holland had done.

Sgt McCallum, aged 34, said it was not until he was approached by solicitors acting for Ms Holland's family that he saw details of the charge. He said: "I was quite shocked when I read it."

Asked by solicitor Andrew Isles, for Ms Holland's family, if he would have called a doctor if he had known the nature of the allegation, he replied: "If I had known that I would have, absolutely."

He agreed he should have been given more information by the arresting officers.

The inquiry heard Ms Holland never appeared on the window charge. She was released the next day.

Two weeks later she was arrested on a charge of breach of the peace and remanded to Cornton Vale where she died. The inquiry continues today.

Fight to save birds from Yorkshire Water plan

YORKSHIRE Water is threatening the largest wildflower meadow in Europe with a water extraction scheme from the River Derwent, says the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

The feeding grounds of around 30,000 wild birds and a population of otters in the Lower Derwent Valley are at risk because of Yorkshire Water's extraction plans to combat the continuing drought.

Mercedes plans emission-free car powered by hydrogen

SMALL cars powered by solar-manufactured hydrogen will form the majority of all vehicles within the next 50 years, according to Mercedes-Benz, the luxury car maker.

Gerrit Hoy, senior manager and the company's environment expert, said the days of the big luxury car were numbered. Mercedes was already looking at lightweight aluminium and carbon fibre compounds.

Ms Hoy said emission-free cars would replace petrol and diesel, and development was already under way. "Cars will be small and light, they will no longer have a buffer zone of material, so you will have to ensure safety in other ways."

Volvo and General Motors say in a series of interviews with car manufacturers in the Swedish magazine, Tomorrow, that the day of the traditional car is limited. Changes are being driven by the demand

from California for zero-emission cars, which means if one can be produced it is already a large potential market.

Compressed hydrogen is Mercedes' favoured alternative to petrol, but producing the fuel is expensive. Mercedes is working on a way of producing hydrogen while the vehicle is moving.

Volvo still sees a future for electric vehicles, and particularly hybrids which can switch from electricity to petrol or diesel. Per-Erik Mohlin, executive vice-president, seriously considered about congestion limiting the future of cars in cities and was linking up with Gothenburg in Sweden and Curitiba in Brazil to find solutions to overall traffic needs.

General Motors' manager for future developments, Thomas Crumm, believes that the private car has a longer future in North America than in Europe. There would be an expansion of mass transportation at the expense of the private car in Europe.

He made an outstanding contribution to public life, particularly in France, throughout the post-war period. He faced a very serious illness with exceptional courage and dignity

John Major

Europe has lost a great statesman. I am mourning a good friend. We worked together in a close and trusting way for many years in the building of Europe and the deepening of German-French friendship

Helmut Kohl

Those of us in Asia and the Pacific will always remember him for his decision to stop French testing of nuclear weapons

Fidel Ramos, Philippines president

The French crossed a frontier on May 10, they conquered fear, broke with taboos and the traps of obscurantism, and gave hope to light

Jack Lang, culture minister, 1981

He was a personality perpetually on show, even to himself. He who every day thought out his self-presentation progressively slipped into a reconstruction of his own reality which was permanent and self-satisfied

Jean-Marie Colombani, Le Monde



A man of enormous strength and vision and a source of great inspiration to many people on the left and centre-left of politics

Tony Blair

Over his many years as president, and by his bearing and his culture, he seemed to symbolise for the rest of the world something of the essential France

Lady Thatcher

When push came to shove, when things got really difficult and I needed to talk to him about a problem and needed his support he would stand with us

George Bush

He was a big rascal and a great president. Very intelligent, very cultured, but a shark

Parisienne Isabelle Gougeon

I'm sick at heart. He was a great guy. He did some good things and some bad things, but nobody's perfect

Parisienne Lilliane Pascal

I was disappointed by his politics but not by the man. He was a great man. He created hopes for society, a vision. But he was unable to fight the growing power of money which is continuing today

Mitterrand voter Georges Locatelli

France mourns man of conscience



Paul Webster

DURING the last two or three years of his life, there were constant rumours that Francois Mitterrand was secretly writing a political autobiography in which he would silence critics who repeatedly said he was inspired by personal ambition rather than the national interest. The book never appeared. The former president was by then more involved in discovering the truth about the after

life than worrying about temporal judgments. He went to the Catholic philosopher Jean Guilton to find out if there was anything after death, because he had dismissed religion as "a collection of absurdities". The philosopher became irritated with unanswerable questions, but this did not stop Mitterrand from worrying over the matter again in the preface of a book written by a woman who counselled the dying, and pestering friends and journalists with his morbid preoccupation. This obsession with spiritual posterity marked much of his life, and among his final acts was to buy a plot of land on the top of Mont Beuvray in central France, a hill made sacred by the unification of the tribes of Gaul against the Romans. It was here that he intended to be buried beside his wife, Danielle, in a doubly symbolic reconciliation. Mitterrand wanted to be seen as the politician who unified a divided nation while

remaining loyal to his wife of 50 years, despite his constant infidelity. **M**RS Mitterrand publicly endorsed a posthumous reunion that even compensated for her husband's long liaison with one of his campaign workers during the 1974 presidential election, which resulted in the birth of a daughter, Mazarine. Future biographers will find it difficult to look at the double grave and make an unfavourable analysis of his private life. From the political point of view, the implied claim that the tomb enfolds a natural heir to a succession of legendary figures — Vercingetorix, Joan of Arc, General De Gaulle — who created the unity of the French nation appears to be the dead president's chosen starting point for judging his career. Will future pilgrims to the grave on the rain-soaked Morvan hills in his fief, La Nièvre,

judge him as a statesman of historical stature, as he saw himself, or merely as the most professional of all post-war French politicians? The most common reason opponents give for dismissing him as merely a Machiavellian opportunist is that he was inconsistent; that his passage from a rightwing deputy in 1946 to Socialist Party leader in 1971 was the result of a series of self-seeking compromises. Yet there are incontestable common themes running through Mitterrand's politics that never varied from his first unsuccessful fight for a national assembly seat in a rich Parisian suburb in June 1948. Five months after that defeat, he fought his first general election in the Nièvre, a depressed rural department, where he seized a seat from the Communists on a platform that warned against the Bolshevisation of France. That first important campaign of the new fourth republic was dominated by the sort of constitutional

questions that fascinated and inspired Mitterrand for the next 50 years, but his election leaflets were devoted mostly to the progressive social issues, including trade union freedom, that he defended when president in 1981. One of Mitterrand's sharpest critics, the wartime Socialist leader Daniel Mayer, pointed out that although Mitterrand's career was first sponsored by an odd coalition of third republic and former Vichy politicians, with the help of royalist lobbies, the future president consistently voted with the left on all social issues throughout the 12 years before the fifth republic was created. This fidelity to a social conscience, instilled by a mother who went to mass at 6 every morning, is far more significant than his abandoning of a fervent attachment to the monarchy or his alliance with the Communists that lost him some of his most influential rightwing friends. The other striking consistency in his philosophy was a

permanent attachment to European union throughout a career which included 10 national assembly elections, four presidential polls, a senatorial election, six departmental (county council) campaigns and four municipal council polls. This determination to see an end to war in Europe was far clearer in his purpose than De Gaulle's readiness to give up a stand-off with Germany, and more idealistic than the ambitions of the other strongly pro-European president, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, whose vision was mainly limited to economic and monetary advances. Mitterrand's advocacy of a united Europe has made Lionel Jospin's defence of Europe inside the Socialist Party a simple task, while seriously limiting the choices inside Jacques Chirac's Gaullist movement. World events and national choices could soon obscure the contribution Mitterrand

has made to the evolution of French and European politics, but they are unlikely to deprive his reputation as the politician's politician. His 50 years at the centre of national decision-making could be the basis of a guide to a successful parliamentary career. **H**IS training as a lawyer — at one period he had to return to the bar — and his profound culture were allied to an instinctive skill in methods of gaining an advantage over better placed opponents. Some of the most outstanding leaders of his generation, often on his own side, like Pierre Mendès-France and Michel Rocard, were routed in tactical battles, despite their apparent intellectual and moral superiority. In pure oratory in front of a campaign crowd, Mitterrand was far superior to De Gaulle, which was perhaps the key factor in his astonishing 1995 presidential challenge. Nor

did he have any serious rival in the art of patience and the ability to turn defeat to later advantage, not least in epic duels with Mr Giscard in 1974 and 1981, when the Mitterrand cunning demolished the Giscard arrogance. Of course, luck, both good and bad, often played a key role, and the last to benefit from Mitterrand's fortuitous timing will be Mr Chirac, the man whom the Socialist leader said would be the laughing stock of France within six months of being elected. The Gaullist president learned the most important lessons of political survival and eventual triumph when he cohabited with Mitterrand as prime minister in 1986. With the country united in mourning a politician whose career represents France's entire post-war glories and disasters, a resurrection of last month's anti-Chirac confrontation could well be postponed indefinitely. **Leader comment, page 8; Obituary, page 10**

An egoist who shared with compatriots a lifelong fascination with himself



Régis Debray

LE Monde **O**F THE hundred kings who have governed France, none has co-operated more readily with portrait painters and biographers than President Francois Mitterrand. In France, Narcissus and the author are never far apart. Nor is the written word distant from public affairs. This man of letters astonish-

ingly metamorphosed into a man of screen images, confessing and hearing his soul in innumerable documentaries, interviews and books. Whereas Charles de Gaulle would speak of France, Mitterrand spoke of himself. The nation failed to interest him. His innermost thoughts, on the other hand, reassured us because we could empathise with the head of state as an ordinary fellow who shared our personal worries. In 1969 De Gaulle ended 30 years of history with a press release of only two sentences. He retired without talking to journalists, or making television appearances, remaining alone with his thoughts until he died. Mitterrand took part in many farewell ceremonies from 1994 onwards, transforming the chronicle of our time into an intimate diary. He interested us in his family life, his adolescence, his meetings and his old friends. He memorialised himself by degrees, smoothing out rough edges, reflecting, selecting testimonies, recording se-

crets. He drew criticism by permitting his former special adviser to photocopy illegally official state secrets — of his impending death, his physical suffering, the after-life. He was quizzed by journalists week-in, week-out: "How are you coping with your treatment, Mr President?" "How do you feel about dying?" Why, over 10 years, did I associate myself closely with a man who was not my type, running the risk of losing myself, as well as my reputation? Without my years of exile, I would never have set my heart and my imagination on General De Gaulle's former adversary, and invested him with the highest mission: making a success of the highest office, a kind of Socialist De Gaulle. A mutual friend arriving from Allende's Chile in 1973

took me to see Mitterrand. He was campaigning in Pau, for some local election. His platform was Catholic-social. His rhetoric eloquent, if not emphatic. At dinner, I discerned his powerful and concise mind, and heard his scathing comments. These sudden switches from seriousness to sarcasm (or, in his writing, from elegy to bitchiness) left many confused. It had one advantage: blowing hot and cold kept the lukewarm people away. The next day, he invited me for a drive around the southwest that lasted three days. I discovered rural France, which I had only ever experienced in my imagination, and finally touched down more drunk than Lindbergh at Le Bourget airport. Mitterrand, village by village, told us about the men,

the battles, the scenery, the valleys surrounding us came to life with stories great and small, from the time of Henri IV till the recent elections. He talked about his grandparents, his ancestors. He gave me back the youth spent in France that I had never had, and a new awareness. Between me and this serious, 50-year-old man — already pursued (these enemies have no pity) by ugly rumours about Vichy, guillotined Algerian patriots, the Suez expedition and the Observatoire scandal — emerged long-repressed desires. I was charmed by an entire French Milky Way, where the Marsellaire of Renoir, Jean Moulin's scarf, Walter Benjamin's round spectacles and the barricades of 1944 shone in the distance. Twenty years later, in September 1984, I saw Mitterrand again in the cloisters of the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris, where he had come to talk to the students. In this old man whose face was smoothed by suffering,

and who stooped like all aged leaders, I did not recognise my secret guide to heroes, it was not that Mitterrand had changed much; rather that the snow had melted. Such are the affairs of the heart. Mitterrand was an egocentric, obliging, productive man, because he never made his ego a rigid dogma. He was open to everyone. By seeing in him a character from a novel, many commentators forget what the difference is between a novel and a treatise. His life's work will be himself, inventing heroes to suit him, all supportive and all different: Croix-de-Feu, Pétainists, Giraudists, Gaullists, third force, anti-Communists, authoritarian anti-capitalists, indulgent liberals and Europhiles — a holy alliance. **Extracted from Régis Debray's six-part series in Le Monde, from a forthcoming book, Let Us Now Praise Famous Men: A Political Education.** © Régis Debray. **Le Monde is a member of the Guardian European partnership.**

Legend's lifetime



1916 Born in Jarnac, south-western France, son of a railway station-master. Attends Roman Catholic colleges, active in right-wing student politics. **1939-42** Serves in French army in 1939-40. Wounded, taken prisoner near Verdun, he escapes from Germany in 1941 and becomes an official of collaborationist Vichy government. **1942-45** While in Vichy, becomes active in Resistance. Meets de Gaulle in Algiers in 1943 and is smuggled back to France to run an intelligence network. **1946** Standing for a small left-wing movement, is elected MP. **1947** At 31, appointed veterans' affairs minister. **1954-1957** Hardline interior minister at start of Algeria's war of independence. Justice minister when military is given full powers to crush rebels. **1955** Forces de Gaulle into a run-off in presidential election. **June 16 1971** After unifying Socialist Party, becomes leader. **1972** Negotiates 1972 Union of the Left pact with Communists. **May 19 1974** Narrowly defeated for president by centre-right Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. **May 10 1981** Defeats Giscard to become France's first Socialist president. **1981-82** Nationalises sectors of banking, insurance and manufacturing. Imposes exchange controls, abolishes death penalty, cuts retirement age to 60 and works week to 39 hours, grants workers fifth week of paid holiday. **1986-1988** Forced to share power with conservative government headed by Jacques Chirac after Socialist loss elections. **March 9 1988** Re-elected for a second seven-year term, defeating Chirac. **1990-91** Sends troops and warships to Gulf war. Is first Western leader to visit the crisis zone. Popularity reaches peak. **April 1992** Freezes French nuclear weapons tests in South Pacific. **Sept 1992** Cancer diagnosed. **March 1993** Socialists crushed in parliamentary election. Conservative government sets about privatising. **May 17 1995** Hands over office to Chirac.

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Alarmed by rapid changes in society, people are clinging to an old standard, writes John Gittings

Gold calms China's nerves

CHINA has invited foreign investors to join the gold rush sweeping the country — the precious metal has become the status symbol in Deng Xiaoping's acquisitive society.

China produced 105 tons of gold last year, the world's sixth largest output. Gold bureau officials are offering profit returns of up to 30 per cent annually.

The invitation coincides with the visit of the foreign secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, who is keen to focus on trade and other relatively uncontroversial issues. But his agenda is complicated by the new row over China's alleged policy of letting orphans starve to death.

Gold mining is not without its own controversies. Prison labour is often used in the state sector, particularly in remote provinces such as Tibet.

No one knows how much is produced in illegal private mines, where prospectors wage gun battles over claims. Many peasants seeking their fortune have died in unsafe shafts burrowed into the mountains.

Throughout Asia the affluent lifestyle of the emerging economic tigers has boosted demand for gold, but China is now the world's biggest market. Estimates of gold consumption in China are as high as 200 tons yearly, with the shortfall made up by legal and illegal imports.

For the fat cat who has everything, a popular restaurant in Guangzhou offers "golden banquets". Guests may select abalone, sharks fin or crocodile, topped with 24-carat gold leaf.

The gold industry has become a paradigm of the new China, where oases of prosperity are expanding even in poorer provinces, but income gaps have widened and life is a desperate struggle for millions.

Mining accidents are regularly reported in the official press as a warning to illegal miners. When a mound of rocks swept down a mountainside burying more than 50 miners and their families alive, the official China Gold said this should be "a lesson to those who covet gold more than life".

Shanty towns run by gold barons, with drugs and prostitution rife, have sprung up near the illegal mines.

People in Chumarleb, a remote county in the north-west province of Qinghai, report the arrival of thousands of goldminers. Hundreds of prospectors at a time for gold, carrying machetes or machine-guns, and the local police force of 40 officers is powerless.



Going for gold... Peasants flock to remote Chumarleb, where the police are powerless to stop illegal mining

PHOTOGRAPH BY BRADLEY ROWE

One enterprising group of gold smugglers from a state-owned mine evaded the attention of security guards by concealing the gold in a coffin, which was accompanied by mourners and a funeral band. Once safely outside, the procession stopped and the "corpse" scrambled out with some difficulty, his pockets weighed down with gold.

But some of the grimmest tales come from state mines on the Tibetan plateau, where political prisoners are used as cheap labour. Refugees have told of being forced to work in primitive conditions to extract gold and other rare metals, such as uranium, lithium and caesium.

"There was no knocking off till the quota was fulfilled," said one refugee interviewed by the London-based Tibet In-

formation Network, "which meant that those who could not work quickly had to go on digging until 11 o'clock or even midnight... Everyone had sores on their back from carrying, and on their hands."

Some prisoners, Chinese as

Some prisoners 'broke their own legs or smashed their heads open with picks'

well as Tibetan, were said to have become so desperate that they "deliberately broke their own legs or even smashed their own heads open with their picks or shovels".

Illegal mining appears to be encouraged in Tibet as well. Tibetans living where gold

can be panned or dug for are forced to pay a "gold tax". This unusual levy requires them either to prospect for gold themselves — and then hand part of it over — or pay an impossibly large sum in lieu.

One refugee explained: "It

reflects the traditional faith in gold as a hedge against inflation. Nearly 40 per cent of Chinese city-dwellers, the official statistics say, own one or more gold ornaments. "I do not approve of it," said the deputy minister of metals, but it was "a fact of life".

Older residents in Shanghai recall the desperate last years of the Nationalist regime before the Communist victory in 1949. "The rich bought gold while the poor reeled from inflation which could halve the value of banknotes in a day.

The situation now is very different, though inflation at 20 per cent or more annually does worry ordinary people. But today's gold craze also reflects a sense of social instability and doubt about the future.

who have turned to gold mining and "broken with tradition". Most Tibetans still believe that the mountains and lakes are "blessings of God" which should not be disturbed.

Gold mining in Tibet, says the Beijing-backed government in Lhasa, is set to become "a new growth sector for the region's economic development".

A lure for many young business people desperate to share in China's new prosperity. Local authorities in mountain areas send emissaries to Beijing to entice investment in gold mining. They promise huge rewards and guarantees to fix the paperwork so that government taxes and controls can be avoided.

High gold consumption

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High gold consumption

News in brief

Eight die in Afghan attack

Eight people were killed and 23 injured in a rocket attack on the Afghan capital yesterday, government-controlled Kabul radio reported.

The radio said the rebel Islamic Taliban militia had fired 77 rockets into residential areas of Kabul. — Reuters.

Investment boost

The Trade and Industry Secretary, Ian Lang, signed a science and technology pact with India yesterday designed to help British investors boost their presence in India's expanding market. — Reuters.

Babies inquiry

Romanian health authorities have launched an inquiry into the death of six babies in a hospital in the east of the country, the news agency Rompres said. — Reuters.

Jail riot spreads

Rebellions in Turkish prisons spread yesterday as inmates took more guards hostage and went on hunger strike. In the latest burst of unrest, inmates seized six guards in the north-western city of Bartin, the local prosecutor, Yasar Kizilhan, said. — AP.

Dolphins puzzle

The discovery of the decomposing bodies of more than 100 dolphins on the Mauritanian coast has puzzled scientists. — Reuters.

Meteor explodes

A fiery meteor streaked over central Japan and blew up, leading to a wave of worried calls to police. — AP.

Drought victims

An estimated 800,000 nomads have migrated from the Soli and Sanaag regions of north-western Somalia to land bordering on Ethiopia because of drought. — Reuters.

Sexist shopping

The Malaysian state of Kelantan, ruled by a fundamentalist Islamic party, has decreed that men and women must stand in separate queues at supermarkets. — Reuters.

River oil spill outstrips early estimates

James Meek in Moscow

AN OIL spill into a river in one of Russia's most important energy-producing regions is much bigger than originally thought, it emerged yesterday.

Workers equipped with Russian and foreign-made oil-clearing devices have been struggling for days to contain the pipeline spill into the ice-covered Belaya river in the autonomous republic of Bashkortostan, just west of the southern Urals.

"The pipeline's owner seriously violated the truth when it said that 100 tonnes of oil were lost. It has now become

clear that we're dealing with a completely different scale," said Rustam Khamitov, Bashkortostan's environment minister. He did not give an estimate of the real amount.

The Sevodnya television news programme speculated that thousands rather than hundreds of tonnes were involved and quoted experts from St Petersburg who had visited the scene as saying they had never seen anything like it.

"The accident still appears smaller than the disaster in the Russian Arctic region of Komi in 1994, when anything from 14,000 to 300,000 tonnes of crude oil poured out of a fractured pipeline into the

frozen tundra. But Bashkortostan is much more densely populated.

The Belaya flows from the Urals in a loop through most of the republic, passing through the capital, Ufa, before joining the Volga in neighbouring Tatarstan.

The original leak, discovered just before the New Year, was said to have contaminated 42,000 square yards of the river and to have polluted the water supply to dozens of villages near Ufa.

The cleanup team has used suction devices, booms and fires to try to get rid of the oil and has already collected almost 700 tonnes of an oil and water mixture, of which

15 per cent is said to be crude oil.

The leak occurred in a pipeline used to carry oil between Bashkortostan and Siberia. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, oil production in Russia has been split between 16 vertically-integrated companies with murky ties to local and national politicians, but pipelines are run by a different agency, Transneft.

But the abysmal state of the Russian pipeline system means more leaks and spills are inevitable without heavy investment.

Yevgeni Usov, of the Russian branch of Greenpeace, said the organisation estimated that 30-50 million

tonnes of oil leaked away each year. He said: "We warned everyone some time ago that you cannot contain a spill once it is in a river and now we have been proved right."

Many of President Boris Yeltsin's opponents believe he has allowed the oil companies to grow rich at the expense of tax avoidance. In fact they have also grown rich at the expense of not paying for the upkeep of their industry.

Meanwhile foreign oil companies complain that the law on production sharing, designed to pave the way for overseas investment in Russian oil and gas, is too restrictive.

Perry offers to station peace troops on the Golan Heights

Derek Brown in Jerusalem

THE United States is ready to station troops to monitor peace on the Golan Heights if both Israel and Syria request the US to participate in that, we are prepared to do that," he said after meeting the Israeli prime minister, Shimon Peres.

The US secretary of state, Warren Christopher, visits Jerusalem and Damascus this week in an attempt to maintain the momentum of the talks.

During his visit to the Middle East Mr Perry announced two new arms deals. He announced a further \$120 million for Israel's Arrow missile, designed to destroy tactical missiles. The weapon's joint development is expected to cost \$750 million.

In Amman, he announced a \$180 million military aid package for Jordan, including 16 F-16 fighter-bombers.

The head of Israel's Shin Bet secret service, criticised for the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, quit yesterday.

The man, identified only by his first initial, "Iaf", is being investigated by the state inquiry into the assassination.

tween Israel and Syria is reached, and we hope and believe that will happen, and if that calls for a peace monitoring force in the Golan Heights, and if both Israel and Syria request the US to participate in that, we are prepared to do that," he said after meeting the Israeli prime minister, Shimon Peres.

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Guerrilla leader emerges armed with pipe of peace

Phil Ganson in Mexico City

MEXICO'S elusive rebel leader, Subcomandante Marcos, has emerged from his jungle hideout for the first time since attending peace talks in 1994.

Armed only with his trademark pipe, the man the government identified a year ago as a former university teacher, Rafael Sebastian Guillen, arrived on Sunday night in San Cristobal de las Casas, where a forum on indigenous rights convened by his Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) was reaching its climax.

Earlier, in the village of La Realidad, in the Lacandon jungle 120 miles from San Cristobal, the guerrilla leader had surrendered his rifle and pistol in the presence of Bishop Samuel Ruiz, chairman of the mediation commission, Conal.

It was the first time since the Zapatistas burst on to

the national scene on New Year's Day 1994, with the seizure of San Cristobal and half a dozen other towns in the southern state of Chiapas, that the subcomandante has appeared in public without a gun.

The diminutive "Major Moises", another senior rebel figure, held out a bag into which Marcos dropped his cartridges, one by one. "I have 300 bullets," he warned the army a year ago, "and the last one is for me."

That statement was issued last February, as troops were hunting the Zapatista leader after a warrant for his arrest on terrorism charges was issued. The warrant was later suspended to allow resumption of peace talks, and the army and police have been ordered to protect him until he returns to La Realidad, probably today.

On his arrival in San Cristobal, in a 10-vehicle convoy escorted by the In-

ternational Red Cross, Marcos congratulated the mediators who, he said, had made possible his presence at the forum and demarcated that "the path of dialogue should remain the only possible way of resolving the war".

Announcing the results of the forum, in which representatives of more than 30 indigenous peoples took part, "Comandante Tacho" said the world would now see "that we are not just ethnic groups or communities, but peoples with well-defined characteristics and a central demand — autonomy".

The forum's demands, to be sent to Mexico's legislature, include indigenous control over local economic, justice and internal security, and the restoration of common land rights.

"We are the peoples who originally inhabited what is now Mexico," said Comandante Tacho, calling for "an end to the tutelage of the Mexican state".

News in brief

Sarajevo Serbs threaten exodus

SEPARATIST Bosnian Serb leaders have threatened to order an exodus from around Sarajevo unless they are granted a delay in the handover of Serb-held districts to the Muslim-led government, diplomats said yesterday. The move could trigger a crisis for peacekeepers.

Nato stepped up security in preparation for a visit by President Bill Clinton. Apache helicopters were put on patrol, and Nato warned it would hit back with deadly force.

Momcilo Krajcinuk, the hardline Speaker of the Bosnian Serb assembly, has asked for a decision by tomorrow on delaying until September 15 the transfer of authority from Serbs to Muslims around Sarajevo, diplomats said.

In a letter to the High Representative for Bosnia, Carl Bildt, Mr Krajcinuk hinted at possible violence. "We have succeeded, hitherto, to persuade our people not to embark on a mass exodus, not to burn houses and not to engage in any form of revenge," he wrote. "However, since the final fate of Serb Sarajevo is unknown, a mass exodus could occur at any moment, probably not without bloody incidents." Mr Bildt's delegation said he had no authority to grant the delay.

The Bosnian president, Alija Izetbegovic, under international pressure, said his government was likely to declare an amnesty for Serb soldiers who have not committed war crimes. "We do not want an exodus of Serbs from Sarajevo, because it would show that a multinational community in Bosnia is not possible," he said. — Reuters, Sarajevo.

Guatemalan poll winner

ALVARO ARZU, a businessman of the National Advancement Party (PAN), declared victory early yesterday in Guatemala's second-round presidential elections. His rival, Alfonso Portillo of the Guatemalan Republican Front, declined to concede until all the results were in.

But with 88 per cent of the vote counted, Mr Arzu held an unassailable lead of 52 per cent over Mr Portillo's 48 per cent. Almost two-thirds of the electorate failed to vote.

A former foreign minister, Mr Arzu gained a reputation for honesty as mayor of Guatemala City from 1985-90. Almost 70 per cent of votes in the capital were cast for him.

In first-round elections two months ago, in which the PAN candidate failed to win an overall majority, his party obtained 42 of the 80 seats in congress.

His big challenge will be to control the armed forces, which relinquished power in 1986, and to conclude talks with leftwing guerrillas. — Phil Ganson, Mexico City.

Army drinks with drug baron

BURMA'S opium warlord, Khun Sa, and senior Burmese army officers toasted a peace agreement ending the rebel's war with the government, one of his aides said yesterday.

About 1,000 fighters from Khun Sa's Mong Tai Army (MTA) took part in the peace ceremony on Sunday at the drug lord's headquarters in the hills of north-eastern Burma's Shan state.

About 20 senior army officers and government officials arrived in Ho Mong by helicopter, an MTA officer said. The highlight was the handing over of MTA weapons to the government side, including a cache of surface-to-air missiles.

The peace agreement was negotiated in December. The pact is expected to turn the MTA into a local government militia, but Khun Sa's fate remains unclear. Last week the United States announced a \$2 million reward for information leading to his arrest and conviction.

Burmese government officials have said Khun Sa will not be extradited to the United States but will be put on trial in Rangoon. — Reuters, Bangkok.

Journalist held in Nigeria

THE Nigeria correspondent of the Financial Times, Paul Adams, was arrested in Bori last Thursday during a reporting assignment. Last night diplomatic efforts to free him were continuing, according to a Financial Times spokesman, who said Mr Adams was visited by a British High Commission official yesterday.

Japan's Murayama bows out

JAPAN'S trade and industry minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto (right) is to succeed Tomiichi Murayama (left) as prime minister, after all three partners in the coalition government gave him their backing yesterday. The two are pictured bowing to one another at a meeting in the prime minister's official residence.

With the three coalition parties holding more than 290 of the 311 seats in the lower house, Mr Hashimoto, aged 58, is certain to win the formal vote in parliament on Thursday.

But leaders of the main opposition Shinshinto (New Frontier Party) were angry at what they saw as an undemocratic transfer of power. They threatened a mass resignation of all their 170 MPs to try to force a dissolution and general elections. Media commentators also expressed unease at the fourth change of prime minister since elections in summer 1993. — Kevin Rafferty, Tokyo.

Hungarian reformer dies

KAROLY GROSZ, the former Hungarian communist leader who helped unleash the reforms which eventually destroyed communism in Hungary, has died aged 65. He died last Sunday of kidney cancer after a long illness, the official news agency MTI said.

He was prime minister from June 1987 to November 1988, and was general secretary of the ruling Hungarian Socialist Workers Party (HSWP) until June 1989, when he became a member of a four-man party presidium which existed for only four months.

He wrested power from the veteran communist leader Janos Kadar in May 1989, ending the Kadar era which began when Soviet tanks crushed the anti-communist revolt in 1956.

Grosz was ousted by reformers at a party congress in October 1989, which transformed the reformist HSWP into a Western-style Hungarian Socialist Party (HSP). The HSP lost the first free elections in 1990, but regained power in 1994.

Grosz remained a communist all his life. He said he was a Marxist who did not believe in Leninism.

"He is a man who opened the flood gates and got swept away by the tide," one Western diplomat said. — Reuters, Budapest.

Death Row woman pleads to die

Garcia will be only the second woman executed in the United States since capital punishment was resumed in 1977. The last execution of a woman in Illinois happened 50 years ago.

Ms Garcia, aged 37, is scheduled to be put to death by lethal injection next week for the murder of her second husband, George Garcia, an abusive man.

"If she gets her wish, Ms

After a lifetime of incest, drugs, alcoholism and bloodshed, Gwen Garcia has ended up on death row. But she is doing something there that most of the condemned would never dream of — she wants to die. She is known in terse penitence as a "volunteer".

Don Terry in Chicago

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Don Terry in Chicago

The death of a president

Mitterrand: hero, despot, socialist, Machiavellian

FRANCOIS MITTERRAND in dying has left commentators, friends and enemies with the same problem which perplexed and often enraged them during his life: how to sum up a man who defies being summed up. His Machiavellian skills of manoeuvre and the subtle ease with which he evaded definition became a legend: not for nothing was he called "the Florentine." Other labels proved hopelessly inadequate: how could a socialist behave like a despot? Indeed how could the president without whom France's socialist governments would never have made it to power be the same person who presided over their fragmentation? In foreign policy it was much the same. At one moment we applauded; at the next we despaired. Could the same person who propped up some of Africa's most corrupt and genocidal regimes also have intervened personally to bring the first humanitarian aid to Sarajevo?

A large shadow of this dilemma hangs over the formal valedictions which international leaders produced in haste after the news emerged yesterday. Though the event was long anticipated, somehow the phrases rang inconsistently, reflecting more what those who uttered them wished to remember than a rounded truth. Chancellor Kohl's verdict that Mr Mitterrand was "a great patriot and (a great) European" comes close to one strand of it, with a hint too of the tension between the two goals. The political judgment of Norway's Gro Harlem Brundtland, that Mr Mitterrand turned the social democratic movement into "a strong rejuvenating force", will be disputed by many in the demoralised French socialist party. Tony Blair is right to talk of him as a man of "enormous strength" — but was he really a "source of great inspiration" to the left and centre-left of politics? There is no evidence that the British Labour Party ever made a seri-

ous study of their French counterparts or sought to build any sort of warm relationship across the Channel. Margaret Thatcher's verdict that Mr Mitterrand symbolised "something of the essential France" needs elaboration. Indeed he knew how to exercise Gallic charm on the woman whose Marilyn-like mouth he once praised. He also knew exactly how to rebuff the glare of her Caligula eyes on which he also remarked. Standing up to the British was as much Mr Mitterrand's contribution to European unity as his well and persistently cultivated relationship with the Germans. Former president Bush chooses to recall how "when push came to shove" Mr Mitterrand stood by the Desert Storm war against Iraq — choosing to forget France's earlier efforts, which infuriated the US at the time, to seek a negotiated alternative to the war. There is rich ambiguity too in the Australian prime minister's verdict that Mr Mitterrand was "France's wise last imperial figure." In, he might have added, a post-imperial age.

In his new year address a year ago Mr Mitterrand said: "I wish you long life at the end of my own. I shall not leave you in spirit, even though it is clear that I must do so physically soon." It was a typical remark, both in its bravery and in its arrogance. Mr Mitterrand's willingness to look death in the face was admirable yet also a measure of his self-obsession. There is no doubt however that he will remain with us in spirit for a long time, if only because we shall be perennially unable to make up our minds about him. More will emerge in time to fill in the still enigmatic blanks in his life from the Vichy period onwards. But perhaps the secret is that there is no final secret. Mr Mitterrand's history, often like that of his own country, offers such a sweeping panorama that it must baffle as well as amaze. La France, c'est moi.

New Labour, new stakeholders

Feelgood words from Mr Blair, but give him credit for trying

TONY BLAIR's speech to Singapore businessmen yesterday marks a milestone in the evolution of New Labour's ideas from a portfolio of policies into a coherent philosophy. Just as in the 1980s Harold Wilson used the prospect of a new society forged in the "white heat" of technology to divert the party faithful from nationalisation, so Tony Blair is trying to infuse the party with a new binding moral imperative to replace the dying embers of collectivism. The Stakeholder Economy is in one sense simply a portmanteau word to embrace a large number of individual initiatives — from putting the long-term unemployed back to work to providing portable pensions — but it is also an attempt to communalise Labour's project and to sublimate the economic insecurity which global economic change, aggravated by Thatcherism, has brought about and to which there may be no instant solution. Where Mrs Thatcher offered a share owning democracy, Mr Blair offers rich and poor a seductive stake in education, welfare, information technology, and corporate governance. All the ideas have powerful antecedents, but gathering them under one all-embracing concept is more than a mere political necessity. If there is one Old Labour virtue that unashamedly shines through, it is equality of opportunity, including the right not to have to spend the rest of your life disintegrating in the *dole* queue.

New Labour needs a moral impera-

tive because there is no magic wand which a fiscally cautious Blair government can wave. It will probably inherit the best macro-economic framework of any Labour administration (including its record North Sea oil output), but that won't stop the global economy from downsizing and marginalising the concept of a secure job. Once globalisation is accepted, it is difficult to turn back the globe on which you turn. It is one thing to talk about creating "a unified society with a strong sense of purpose and direction" and building a trust relationship in firms; but in practice it is like asking for a culture transplant. Cynics can reel out a depressing catalogue of post-pre-electoral panaceas which never fulfilled their promise including nationalisation, privatisation, technological change, monetarism and reduced government spending. However, the daunting nature of the problem should not prevent fresh solutions being tried. New Labour's macro-economic policy won't be much different from John Major's and its headroom will be even more constrained if it signs up for the single currency. On micro-economic policy he has a number of interesting initiatives which could have a significant effect. Changing society itself may be beyond the power of one man or one government, but merely to alter direction from the self-interested, anti-communitarian *cul-de-sac* along which the nation has been bounced against its will would be a liberation worth waiting for.

Al Mas'ari and the Vickers worker

Freedom of speech? Try telling that to a lathe-operator!

COLUMNISTS are paid to have strong opinions, and strong opinions are a spicy part of the brew which sells newspapers. But the dividing line between principle and perversity can sometimes be as muddy as a January football pitch, especially when a liberal voice temporarily mislays its normally trusty compass.

Admirers of Ian Jack's column in the Independent on Sunday awoke to find just such a confusion at the weekend. Reflecting on the Al-Mas'ari deportation, Mr Jack observed that the rest of the liberal press had taken an uncompromising stand. The Home Office's action had been variously denounced as stinking, rotten, ludicrous and craven. Mr Jack however felt uneasy that "editorialists and other moralists" had too readily written off the British jobs and wages apparently at stake in the Government's decision to expel the Saudi dissident from these shores.

In order to preserve one of the few surviving heartbeats of British industry, he mused, might the case not constitute "a necessary shame"? To underline his reservations, Mr Jack invited us to imagine the problems confronting the liberal editorialist faced with explaining to "the man on the lathe at the Vickers tank factory" why it was necessary for him to lose his job in order that Mr al-Mas'ari should remain in Willesden undisturbed.

This would be a difficult assignment, says Mr Jack. But that hardly justifies abandoning the attempt. Imagine how indignantly the *IoS* columnist, one of the most unbending defenders of Salman Rushdie, might react if the man on the lathe demanded that the novelist should be sacrificed so that his factory did not lose its Iranian orders. Not that such a situation would arise. The Government stood firm on Rushdie. Just as it could have done on Al-Mas'ari too.

Introducing THE STAKEHOLDER SOCIETY



Letters to the Editor

Film through a wide-angle lens

ROS COWARD is right (Comment page, January 8): the BFI's primary responsibility should not be to a metropolitan elite. As the person who has joined the BFI most recently, and therefore cannot take credit for the changes, I can testify that it has broken with its old image and reached out well beyond the London elite to popular new audiences — younger and spread right across the country.

That is what BFI TV and Connoisseur Video are all about — making the best available to new audiences in new ways. Martin Scorsese's *A Personal Journey* through American Movies was made for Channel 4 by BFI TV. Not only was it chosen by the Guardian's TV critic as one of the five best programmes of 1995, but it also touched a popular audience of over one million viewers. Isn't this doing precisely what Ros Coward says we should?

And when the BFI's 1995 London Film Festival enjoys a record audience of 100,000, does that sound as if the institute wants to cloister itself away with a few old structuralists and while away its time?

It does not matter whether it is the Museum of the Moving Image (voted best-liked London attraction in 1995) or our library, which last year answered more than 30,000 inquiries: the whole of the BFI is actively engaging with a wide variety of audiences across Britain. It is hard to be an elite institution (that is, one that wants to be the best) and yet serve the widest range of audiences. But that is our ambition and it is in the process of being realised. We know that. It is a pity Ros Coward does not.

Jane Clarke,
Assistant Director,
British Film Institute,
21 Stephen Street,
London W1P 2LN.

Waiting for Lotto

WORK as an NHS manager in the West Midlands, a region where the maximum waiting time of nine months (Letters, January 8). But since any hospital manager who admits to breaching the guarantee faces the sack, there are strong pressures on staff to use a number of wheezes to remove long-waiters from published figures. The number of patients "suspended" from waiting lists has recently increased markedly. Patients are also given "personal treatment" which let hospitals remove them from published figures. If all else fails, hospitals simply falsify statistical returns to the NHS Management Executive.

Waiting-list statistics will only regain credibility when their production is free from political pressure, perhaps under an independent Government Statistical Service. Name and address supplied.

WHAT a wonderful opportunity for the Millennium Fund to prove its worth by acquiring Lands End and John O'Groats (Life on the edge, January 8). It could then, by creating car parks several hundred yards away, return them to their "natural" beauty and make them freely accessible to all.

Ruth Jones,
39 High Street, Feckenham,
Redditch, Worec.

Battle hymns of the republic

ROY HATTERSLEY's argument against the anachronistic monarchy is fine (About time we grew up, January 5); but where do you stop when looking at anachronisms within our governing system? With a democracy which gives power to the people for one to two days every five years? Perhaps that was acceptable in the slower-moving world of the Victorians, but surely not now where technology rules the planet, shrinking distances and harnessing time.

And MPs are elected to sit, if they can find a space to sit, in their own theme park in Westminster and throw metaphorical sticky buns at each other until the small hours. We all know this. Whitehall has little to do with how we are governed today.

Clare O'Brien,
23 Warbeck Road,
London W12 8NS.

HATTERSLEY condemns the monarchy as "an aspect of our constitution which is rationally indefensible but kept in place by subservience". Yet he could address the same objection to the uncodified and unaccountable discretionary powers of ministers. These are inherited from the Crown prerogative and too often abused by "majoritarian" party governments supported by only a minority of the popular vote.

Let's not maintain the "existing executive authority of government and legislative power of Parliament" but seek radical surgery here too. Chris Lamb,
53 Charles Street,
Newark, Notts NG24 1RN.

WELCOME to the republic camp, elder statesman Hattersley. And where was Cabinet Minister Hattersley on this issue a couple of decades ago? Why, keeping his head down, just like his government-in-waiting successors of today.

And to what will future Guardian readers most likely be treated after enduring a further two monarchical decades? Why, keeping his head down, just like his government-in-waiting successors of today.

Geoffrey N Armitage,
Norheim, Dufftown,
Banffshire AB35 4AR.

THE otherwise excellent article has a single flaw. Roy Hattersley refers to "Lord John M. Fawcett". Yet he writes that "People who ought to know better join

in the pretence that they (the royal family) are intrinsically superior human beings."

Defences destroys democracy at every level, and the Windsors are merely one end of a system that runs throughout our society. The existence of titles — whether hereditary or bestowed — undermines the potential for equality of opportunity for all of us.

I suggest a Campaign for Real Names whose members — including sympathetic newspapers — refuse to use the titles promulgated by those who wish to set themselves apart from the rest of us. Mr Stevas, Mr and Mrs Windsor (senior and junior) and Mr Hattersley may then be able to compete on equal grounds to be heard on any subject — the only justification for publication being that what they have to say is more important than who says it.

Nigel Gann,
144 Obelisk Road,
Woolston,
Southampton SO19 9DP.

AS Britain's monarchy becomes an overrated soap opera, what is underrated is the gullibility of the public, cloistered in its media culture.

The sexual cavortings, homicides, occult dabblings and insanities of previous British monarchs put the present royal infidelities and estrangements into nursery-tale land. Whatever ritual camouflage or symbolic secrecy is left to the royals has been stripped away to reveal just another post-modern, messed-up family.

The public expects and the media present. It is a game created by our monochrome media masters, who are not

concerned with egalitarian rules of fair play but sanctimoniously accuse all those they scapegoat.

Neil Littlewood,
Flat 1,
13 Rochdale Way,
London SE8 4LY.

HATTERSLEY suggests that if this country follows Ireland's example we could elect a president of the calibre of Mary Robinson.

We could alternatively emulate the Czech Republic and elect a leading playwright — Alan Bennett for president! John O'Dwyer,
11 Watling Court,
Bedford Road,
Houghton Regis,
Beds LU5 5GS.

HATTERSLEY seems to be convinced that any president would have to be a politician. Yet people who are publicly popular over a long term — like Vera Lynn, Ernie Wise, Brian Rix or Paul McCartney — would be excellent for the decorative purposes for which non-elected heads of state are required: opening things and going on foreign goodwill trips. She or he could do it for a fixed term and a reasonable salary.

N R Bassett,
PO Box 1935,
London N19 2EJ.

WE DON'T need a presidential head of state, be it Tebbit, Healey or the blessed Mary Robinson.

We can simply employ a member of the present royal family at, say, the pay rate of an MP.

John Sanger,
Red Cottage,
Woodgreen, Herts.

UN election needs monitoring

THE visit this week to London of Dr Boutros Boutros-Ghali for the commemoration of the first meeting of the UN General Assembly in 1946 must focus minds on the question of his successor. Dr Boutros-Ghali's term of office ends on December 31. When he was appointed he stated that he would not seek re-election. What is needed now is some democratic discussion, both about possible candidates and selection procedures. Secret lobbying is going on, particularly within the Security Council. "We the Peoples" are not being consulted.

Britain, as a permanent member, has both positive opportunities and a negative brake in the veto. Perhaps the

Non-Governmental Organisations recognised by the UN might be invited to suggest candidates? By involving NGOs now, the British government could help to avoid any last-minute rush to appoint Dr Boutros-Ghali's successor.

Bruce Kent,
Forum for UN Renewal,
Pat Gaffney,
Pax Christi,
Michael Irwin,
UN Association,
Lib Peck,
National Peace Council,
Anna Raitin,
International Peace Bureau,
Janet Bloomfield,
CND.

c/o 163 Holloway Road,
London N7 8DQ.

A Country Diary

ARGENTINA: With a land area of 2.8 million sq km, and stretching 3,500 km from north to south, Argentina is the eighth largest country in the world, almost the size of India. On a four-week tour, we travelled between the small Andean town of Abra Pampa high up on the Altiplano in the north west, down to the southernmost tip at Ushuaia — "world's end" on Tierra del Fuego, passing through subtropical rainforest, high altitude deserts and high latitude steppes, humid temperate grasslands, alpine and sub-Antarctic forests and rugged coastal cliffs. Conditions of the need to preserve these sensitive environments, Argentina has created an extensive system of national parks, one of the first in Latin America, dating back to the turn of the century, added to which are many important provincial parks and reserves. We stayed in a number of these protected areas during our visit, each with its own range of habitats and distinctive occupants — the majestic condor patrolling the

high peaks of the Andes and the wild vacuina on the puna below; touzans in the Igazu rainforest; whales, elephant seals and magellanic penguins around the Valdez peninsula; and black-browed albatrosses following our boat down the Beagle Channel. If I had to choose one lasting memory from so many it would be my first encounter with a glacier, the awesome Moreno glacier which is the dominant feature of the Parque Nacional Los Glaciares in the Santa Cruz province of Patagonia. One of the few glaciers in the world that is still advancing, it has been created over thousands of years by snow, compacted under tremendous weight, recrystallising into ice and flowing eastward through the Fitzroy range of the Andes. Its visible face is 60 metres high, and to stand on the boardwalk beside it, listening to the creaks and groans, then the sudden explosion as a large chunk collapses, is as much an audible as visual experience.

J M THOMPSON

سكنا في الامم

Diary
Matthew Norman

COMEDY, as the Diary has mentioned before, has unhappily emerged as an important political weapon (who can forget Mrs Gorman's ribbiter about becoming governor of the Falklands, or Tony Banks's aperçus about flatulence?). But there is new evidence that it has been put to an even more sinister purpose. After a lifetime wisely spent giving humour the widest berth, the FA chief Mr Graham Kelly — a man whose career in sports administration robbed the world of town-hall pedantry of a potential superstar — made his first-ever joke, and the results threaten catastrophe. Last April 1, Mr Kelly appeared on BBC's Football Focus, and while the England squad illustrated the point behind him — explained why enlarging the goal was a splendid idea. The fact that this was an April Fool's joke, alas, has escaped FIFA which is now seriously considering a proposal guaranteed to ruin the game. So it seems that Mr Kelly's first-episode coincided with the first time anyone ever took him seriously. It is a tragic irony, Brian, of almost Soppolean bleakness.

MEANWHILE, these are not amusing times for Arts Council Chairman Lord Gowrie, whom soon announce closure of, and reduced incomes for, theatres. However, I can exclusively report how Lord Gowrie is spending some of that little money he still controls. He has directed it to sponsor a staff (the RSC's among them) how to cosset their punters. Or, to translate into the Arts Council's own sub-Birrean argot, "Customer Orientated Mission Statement and Strategy Systems". It may sound silly, says an official, but it is, in fact, "a long-term strategy". Could you could make it up? Probably not.

THOSE who persist in sneering at the intellect of the Brits are bobby muck think again. Two CID officers who left their jumbo tin of coffee briefly unattended in Wath, South Yorkshire, opened it later to find an alarming foreign substance. Frantic enquiries ensued, reports Police Magazine, and the manufacturer warned of sabotage. Eventually, the truth emerged. Having helped themselves to the coffee, certain uniformed coppers sought to disguise the deficiency by popping into what coffee remained an unopened can of nasty peas.

I AM speechless with excitement. My old friend Derek Thompson, the central Channel 4 Racing presenter, is to be married. To a Tish named Julie Corbin on June 22, according to my so-called rival, Nigel Dempster, in the down-market Daily Mail. The couple, Dempster relates, have been celebrating in Dubai, "where Thompson commented at race meetings at Nad Al Sheba and Jebel Ali, commenting from Newmarket to the United Arab Emirates". Commenting? It must be a remarkably long day — especially since Thompson, bypassed by his gallant second to a small dog in the Great Tipster Stakes, retains his 0891 tipping line. However, love has done little for his luck to judge from yesterday's form — his selection at Southwell was unplaced and the top tip was due to run at a meeting that was called off at the last minute. Let us pray that the wedding, at which both Stopee and myself will be users, avoids the same fate.

THE late Francois Mitterrand famously said of Lady Thatcher that she had "the eyes of Caligula and the mouth of Marilyn Monroe", but his description of her, and those of his Cabinet, will go with him to the grave. Or will they? Readers with secret knowledge of Mitterrand's verdicts on Mr Major, Michael Howard, Mr Benn and the rest are invited to share them with the rest of us. The usual prize for the three-wit is Graham Kelly need not apply.



Why hypocrisy is really good for us

Commentary
Hugo Young

WHEN Malcolm Rifkind sits down in Beijing today with the Chinese foreign minister, we can safely say which man will feel the more enraged. Maybe Rifkind will experience some revulsion at yet more evidence, to be screened on Channel 4 tonight, of barbaric practice in Chinese orphanages. But he will contain himself. Qian Qichen will express his fury at this slight. The embassy in London, revealing that even old cold war clichés do not always fade away, has already said the programme "will harm the mutual understanding between the Chinese people and Britain". It wants the film withdrawn.

whether indirectly through Hong Kong or directly through the trade contracts that have become the prime goal of British diplomacy. Demanding China is no part of the Rifkind script. Embarrassment does not touch him from doing business with child-destroyers and systematic repressors of political rights. Embarrassment derives only from the inconvenience to the world of a spectacle for all the world to see. This discrepancy is now so naked that it calls attention to a new phenomenon of high politics: the waning of hypocrisy. The Foreign Secretary offers no apology for the suppleness of his attitude to China. Making any deal conditional on some improvement, even of a symbolic kind, in China's observance of human rights is a proposition too laughable to contemplate. Likewise the notion that arms sales to Saudi Arabia — a country where even minimal human rights exist only at the whim of the oligarchs in power, might be a suitable matter for debate. In the waning of hypocrisy, the words of Ann Widdecombe signal the richest moment. To justify the expulsion from Britain of Mohammed al-Mas'ari, she did not even pretend this was other than at the behest of the Saudis. No dressing-up in cryptic references to Mas'ari's general un-

desirability. No grand expulsion "in the public interest". Instead, the minister admits it is all about British jobs, in defence of which no abatement before Saudi displeasure is too humiliating. This may yet cause the Government trouble in the courts, where Mas'ari is taking his case. But the minister has shown the Saudis and Saudis where Mas'ari's heart is. She has also told the truth: a merciful release from the duplicities obtaining when arms sales and political decency ally and everywhere were alleged to co-exist. Such pretences have not entirely stopped. The Foreign Office continues to issue codes of good government, and the sainted Lady Chalker parades the world insisting that these represent pre-conditions of British aid. Nigeria and Kenya, grotesquely traducing human rights and democratic process, have felt the consequences in their pockets. But not much. Even the murder of Ken Saro-Wiwa was but perfunctorily regretted. Elsewhere, reinforcing dictators is the shameful purpose of British diplomacy, with Indonesia as the definitive case. Recently raved by the Berlin watchdog, Transparency International, as the most corrupt country in the world, Indonesia has been succoured for years with arms deals, and soft loans to

assist their making. By British ministers never known to have criticised a particle of Indonesia's disregard for basic democracy. Indeed, it was when signing a soft loans deal in Jakarta in 1993 that Douglas Hurd, the most sophisticated exponent of the new, unvarnished amorality, opined that making links between aid and human rights was not a "sensible and fruitful thing to do". Since morality is so plainly an inconvenience to policy-makers, there is something to be said for evicting it from the language of international politics. Its impositions so often prove unsustainable. Campaigning for the presidency in 1992, Bill Clinton promised to raise the tariffs on Chinese goods as a way of bringing pressure on Beijing to respect the human rights of Chinese and Tibetans. By 1994 he had reneged on the pledge.

Isn't it a relief to be spared the posturings of politicians who pretend?

We now know the primacy of trade means that China's internal regime can be tightened with impunity. So isn't it a relief to be spared the disgusting posturings of politicians who would otherwise continue to pretend their care about what happens in a Shanghai orphanage? There are other merits to such a shift in the framework. It may, for one thing, be popular. Ranging the free speech of Mohammed al-Mas'ari against job security at the Vickers tank plant, nobody could be certain that the Vickers workers would vote

for the superior right of an Islamic exile to destabilise the regime that buys the tanks. Disclaiming moral virtue, equally, can be a salutary aid to truth. If William Waldegrave, in 1989, had felt able to be as candid as Ann Widdecombe today, and defied Parliament to forbid an open shift in the guidelines governing arms sales to Iraq, more than half the charge sheet being examined by the Scott Inquiry would never have existed. Arguably, the major part of a scandal that was not only untrue but, by the code most governments live by, unnecessary.

In the end, there's a level of realism to which one resists so smoothly descending. Hypocrisy may be offensive, but it has the irreplaceable virtue of keeping alive a set of public values. Without values to aspire to, there are no values to betray. Declaring an absence of moral aspiration is a convenient way of disclaiming the need for cant, but it also surrenders any concept of international responsibility save that of devil take the hindmost. Britain is not alone in this. What the world announces when it abandons pretence is that it has also abandoned the struggle to do better. Struggling, just occasionally, for the primacy of morality over short-term economics will never be simple. But if the world hadn't asserted such a primacy against apartheid, South Africa would now be in revolutionary turmoil. And if as the Widdecombe (actually the Howard-Major) doctrine declares, the abdication of morally economics extends beyond the fortresses of Saudi Arabia and China into the values our own country is now supposed to uphold for itself, then give me the spur of old hypocrisy every time.

You've got to be carefully taught to bully



BEING called a "black bitch" was everyday life for 13-year-old Gauri Vedara, one of the players in Byker Grove, voted best children's TV soap last year. Only when the alchemy of racism and sexism combined, and her tormentors threatened to beat her up, did she tell her mother, who told her she should have stood up for herself. Gauri lives in Gosforth, a middle-class enclave of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. She goes to Gosforth High, a school which prides itself on being a calm community of high achievers. Her mother, Kusan Vedhara, had noticed that Gauri — a star in her local world — seemed to be ailing, losing both sleep and weight. She kept Gauri off school and demanded something be done. Gauri's crisis synchronised with fierce attacks by white boys on children in and out of the school gates. The school was acquiring the reputation of a working-class war zone. Black leaders' fruitless efforts to engage the police and the school suddenly found an ear when the parents of 30 black children withdrew them from Gosforth High last term until their safety could be secured. According to their advocate, Devender Ghai, president of the Hindu Sikh Friendship Society, complaints to the school yielded little. "The parents tried to see the head about racism but he was too busy or unobtainable. Then he said it was just bullying, nothing racial. And bullying goes on everywhere."

ish, elitist motivations of the school's hierarchy that makes these things go on." Gauri Vedhara's challenge also exposes the limits of the Government's law-and-order strategy for schools: its anti-bullying pack. Don't Suffer in Silence, prompted by exemplary research by Peter Smith and Sonia Sharp at Sheffield University. The Government stresses the importance of speaking out. But the bullying helpline organised by ChildLine in 1994 received calls from 58,000 children in eight months — possibly 58,000 children who weren't telling their parents or their teachers. Their suffering tells us what we should surely know: that reigns of terror rely on the silence of our vicar. And will deny things as determinedly as the perpetrator. And still the Government disconnects the culture of bullying from the mainstream oppression that sustains it. The rise of the rhetoric about bullying shadows the decline of anti-racist and anti-sexist strategies, derided and discarded as political correctness. Except in London, where they have changed the language of the vicar. And there, they barely exist beyond the equal-opportunities protocols required by Ofsted that often languish, unattended, in the head's filing cabinets. Eighty per cent of the children who called ChildLine were black children. And yet the Department for Education says it has no strategy against sexism. "It is endemic and rampant in schools," says a veteran Tyneside teacher. "I don't have a class in which there aren't difficult or dangerous boys."

Stake that claim

Tony Blair should ignore the critics of his new big idea: the stakeholder society finally gives the left a credible ideology that, Will Hutton argues, stands up effectively to laissez-faire capitalism

enough to beat its ideological rival, communism, and even good enough to take on and beat British collectivism — but as a model for the good society or efficient economy it falls far short of any decent yardstick. It is characterised by endemic short-termism, economic volatility and social divisiveness — and, when married to the top-down centralised nature of British government, has delivered a society in which civic duty and public service have become progressively unencompassed. It was exactly against this kind of laissez-faire capitalism that the stakeholder idea was first developed — by the American left during the sixties. The word derived from the way US settlers staked their claims to virgin territory. Business strategists in the late fifties and early sixties used it to rethink the idea of a company as a network of reciprocal claims between shareholders, employees, bankers, suppliers and managers. Large industrial organisations were bureaucracies which arbitrated between these rival claims — a necessary function in any industrial economy — but it is difficult to recall a Conservative politician ever indicting the operation of stock-market capitalism for commodifying companies and workers, or proposing a clear theory of corporate rights and obligations. Let the Conservative idea to promote deregulation and to regard stock-market freedoms as sacred?



THE snap reaction of the left to the idea of the stakeholder economy and society is that it is little more than Thatcherism in drag, just another way of talking about popular capitalism or the enterprise culture. The right is no more forgiving. The dynamics of capitalism are immutable and brook no reform. Tony Blair will find that championing stakeholding is no easy ride; he has entered the political battle of ideas with a vengeance. But the stock criticisms are wrong. Like it or hate it, stakeholding does represent a different political economy of capitalism with profound implications for economic, social and political organisation. It stresses that workers should be seen as members of firms rather than locked into an antagonistic confrontation between capital and labour. In this world view, firms are social organisations embedded in a complex skein of rights and moral obligations.

maximisation of shareholder value and the "burden" of welfare and social costs. Behind the vocabulary lies a different view of what makes a successful market economy — and a dramatically different approach to economic and social policy. Corporate law, the organisation of pensions, systems of training, company decision-making, the behaviour of the Stock Exchange and the role of education are markedly different in a stakeholder world. The international evidence, as Blair said in Singapore, is that this approach delivers social cohesion and economic growth; the two feed off each other. By pinning his colours to the stakeholder mast, Blair has taken a decisive political step. New Labour has now eliminated a substantial and novel body of ideas: it stands in sharp opposition to the laissez-faire, financially-driven model of capitalism promoted by the right. This may have been good

ism of the left and right. In Britain the whole debate has never taken off before. The post-war settlement was a compromise — allowing the left to achieve its social goals through raising public spending and extending public ownership, but leaving the right to protect civil freedoms and the ancient notion that the firm represented no more than the shareholders' interests. The case for stakeholding was left to fringe groups campaigning for worker participation and co-operatives. But with the instruments of Old Labour collapsing, and the right building on the laissez-faire model, the most promising avenue for the left is stakeholding.

The TUC has recognised this for some time, and General Secretary John Monks has established a task force to suggest legislative proposals and ways the unions might profit. The Doherty Commission, created by the Conservative and Social Cohesion came out firmly in favour of stakeholding last summer. Tony Blair's been tantalisingly slow to adopt it publicly but the Singapore speech is a watershed. It sets the authentic left credentials, blindsides his opponents and has a reforming sting. Witness just one passage. "It is surely time," he said, "to assess how we shift the emphasis in corporate education — from the company being a mere vehicle for the capital market to be traded, bought and sold as a commodity — towards a vision of the company as a community or partnership in which each employee has a stake, and where the company's responsibilities are more clearly delineated."

Michael Portillo immediately attacked this as a straight copy of long-standing Conservative policy — but it is difficult to recall a Conservative politician ever indicting the operation of stock-market capitalism for commodifying companies and workers, or proposing a clear theory of corporate rights and obligations. Let the Conservative idea to promote deregulation and to regard stock-market freedoms as sacred? But Blair's advocacy of what he calls the Stakeholder Welfare System may arouse more concern. There is a clear accent on social cohesion and the necessity to recast the welfare state so it ceases to offer an obstacle to training or self-employment; and it is equally attractive to open up collective means of self-insurance to allow individuals to produce pensions or sickness benefit above the basic levels. The danger, though, is also clear. Singapore, a provident funds model, has been used to replace existing welfare structures, with their accompanying need for a redistributive tax system. Yet in sum the commitment to a stakeholder economy and society is a key moment — a way of binding the centre and left together in common cause while providing the ideological impetus for important economic and social return. Blair went to Australia this Christmas with no advisers and a suitcase of books. On this evidence he should go again.

But when Mr Ghai reported white boys ambushing Asian children at the local Metro station, and when a posse of white boys scaled the school fence and laid into a team of Asian boys on a sports field, "then the head realised it was racial". According to the headmaster, Keith Nancekiville: "Gosforth High is a relaxed and comfortable community and in that context it is not always easy to get people to address fundamental things like bullying, and particularly racism. These events have given us the mandate to have conversations." It seems that the aggressors were expelled or truant boys. But a former pupil, not one of its "high achievers", remembers the culture of disrespect that alienated "failures" like his own assailants. "Like me, they weren't A-level material. And the school didn't do enough for them — or me. We weren't valued. It is the same."

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François Mitterrand

A maker of modern France

THE death of François Mitterrand at the age of 79 removes from the French, and European, political stage one of its most tenacious leading men. He will be remembered as the left-wing President of France who in his two terms of office between 1981 and 1995 educated French socialism into an appreciation of the realities of power in a post-Marxist age and who sought to convince his fellow citizens that European integration was the means to fulfil France's self-proclaimed mission to lead Europe.

His election to the presidency in 1981 was the culmination of a political odyssey that had started 35 years earlier and had survived setbacks which would have destroyed a less single-minded ambition. His career combined moments of great national popularity with periods in which he was distrusted, and even despised, as a scheming and unprincipled adventurer.

Towards the end of his second term, he became the most unpopular president in the history of the Fifth Republic. The publicising of his links during the second world war with the collaborationist Vichy regime, and even more of his enduring friendship with René Bouquet, who in 1942 had supervised the rounding up of the Paris Jews, caused utter dismay to those who had regarded him as the champion of Republican values. The verdict of posterity is likely to be kinder and to place him, alongside General de Gaulle, as a key figure in the creation of modern France.

The comparison with de Gaulle is one that never failed to infuriate the general's acolytes, for whom Mitterrand personified the corrupt political class which had done so much damage to France before the advent of the Fifth Republic and which understood nothing of national grandeur. Yet there are similarities between the two men. They shared an olympian manner; a deep interest in literature and history; the capacity to behave with cold ruthlessness towards opponents; and a refusal to acknowledge the right of the United States to determine the foreign policy of its allies. Above all, Mitterrand taught the French left to accept the institutional order created by de Gaulle after 1958.

Little in Mitterrand's background suggested the future course of his career. Born in 1916 in the small village of Jarnac, near Cognac in the Charente department, he was one of eight children and grew up in a family that was bourgeois, conservative and Catholic. He did not rebel against this background either as a schoolboy or as a law student in Paris and to the extent that he was involved in the frenetic politics of 1930s France, his sympathies unquestionably lay with the nationalist right rather than with the left-wing causes of the Popular Front or the Spanish Civil War.

The second world war was the making of Mitterrand. He fought, and was decorated for bravery, in the disastrous 1940 campaign that led to the fall of France. Like de Gaulle 25 years earlier, he was taken prisoner by the Germans. Unlike de Gaulle he managed to escape from captivity, aided perhaps by his unremarkable physical appearance, and returned to France. What happened next provides the background to the first great controversy surrounding his career. Mitterrand became an important resistance leader and took part in the liberation of Paris in August 1944. But he also accepted employment from Marshal Pétain's collaborationist Vichy government and was awarded the regime's medal of honour, the *Francisque*. To his enemies this showed a duplicitous opportunism that characterised his whole career, to his supporters it demonstrated his intelligence in finding a cover for his resistance work.

Mitterrand emerged from the war with a wife, Danielle, daughter of a resistance leader, to whom he stayed married despite an almost legendary series of affairs and one night stands, and with the determination to make politics his career. Crucially, the war defined Mitterrand as an opponent of the two principal forces of the New France — Gaullism and communism. At a memorably unsuccessful meeting with de Gaulle to acknowledge the latter's authority over the resistance movement he ran, an act of insubordination that the general neither forgot nor forgave. At the same time, however, he resisted the smothering embrace of the French Communist Party which had emerged as France's largest and most politically correct, political movement. This double refusal of allegiance gave a unity to the whole of his subsequent career.

By the age of 30, Mitterrand was established as a drivingly ambitious, and independent-minded, professional politician. Elected to the National Assembly in November 1946 for the largely rural department of the Nièvre, he retained his seat for all but three of the next 28 years and acquired the local power base — mayor of Château-Chinon, member of the departmental council — that all French politicians regard as a vital political resource. In January 1947, he became the youngest government minister this century and he subsequently served in 11 cabinets during the Fourth Republic. No one doubted his intelligence or his capacity for hard work; what was queried was the integrity of his convictions. He was a leader of a small centrist party, the UDSR, that was more notable for the opportunistic bargaining of its parliamentary votes than for the solidity of its beliefs.

He was distrusted by the democratic left for his willingness to lock up Algerian nationalists once the war of independence began in 1954 and by the nationalist right for his Europeanism and his support for self-government for France's sub-Saharan colonies. To his immense chagrin, even Pierre Mendès France, the hero of progressive France, seemed willing as prime minister to give credence to unfounded rumours that his interior minister might be a communist agent. This period gave Mitterrand his reputation for Machiavellian cunning and the most enduring of his nicknames, "the Florentine". Yet to say that his name was made by the Fourth Republic is a dubious accolade, given the regime's collapse in the face of decay at home and insurrection in Algeria. With the exception of Mendès France, none of the politicians most identified with it was ever fully rehabilitated.

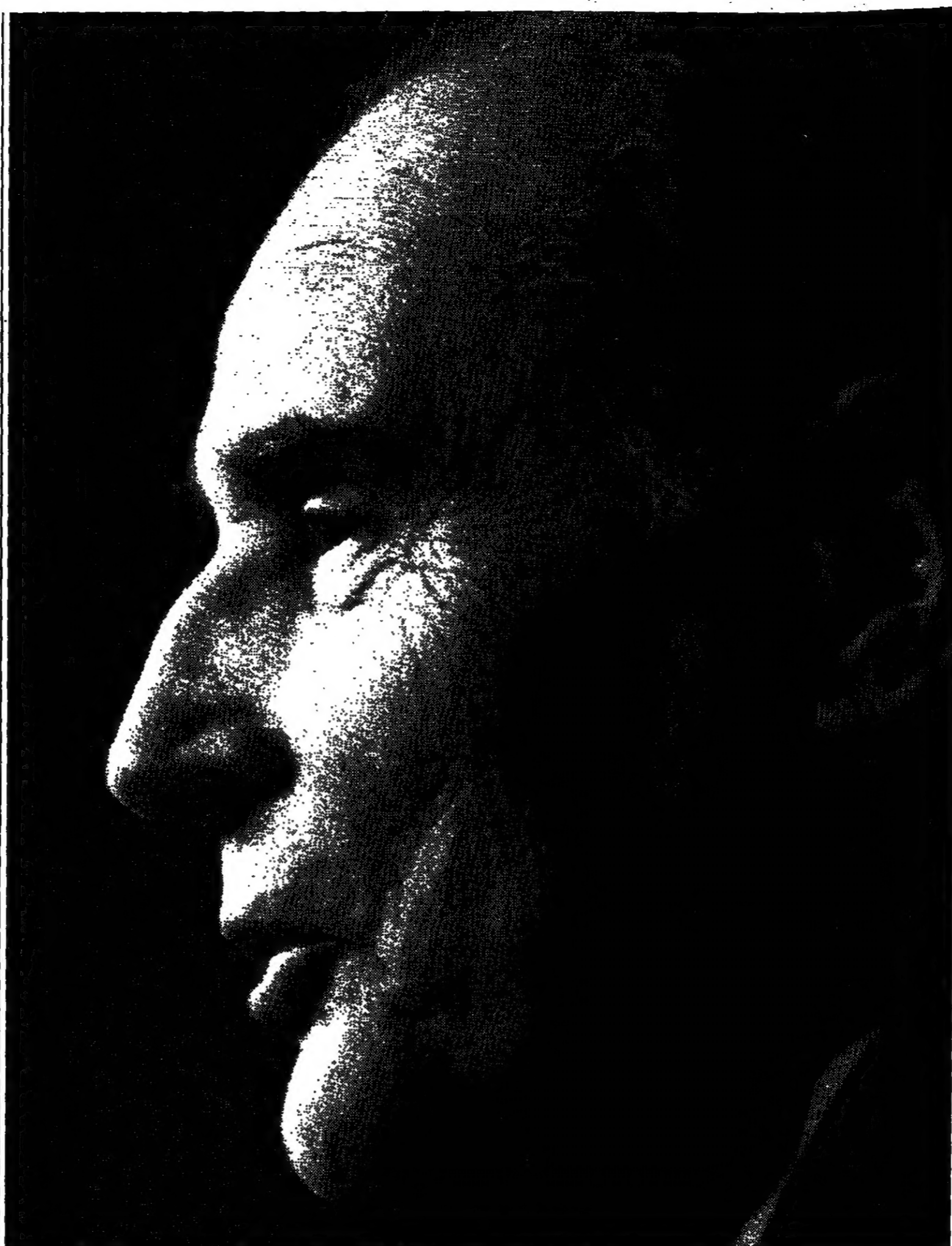
No one has doubted his intelligence; what was queried was his integrity

What saved Mitterrand, apart from his youth and talent, was paradoxically his absolute refusal to compromise with the new political order established by de Gaulle in 1958. He exposed de Gaulle's return to power and in a famous pamphlet, *Le Coup d'Etat Permanent*, denounced the authoritarian nature of the new Fifth Republic. In the short term, this opposition cost him dear. He lost his National Assembly seat in the 1958 election, was refused entry to a new left-wing grouping, the Parti Socialiste Autonome; and was nearly destroyed in 1959 by a scandal in which he was accused, falsely as it — much later transpired, of setting up a fake assassination attempt. He was to be out of office for 23 years. Yet his resolute opposition to de Gaulle's republic enabled him to drape himself in the clothes of French democratic republicanism and to begin the process of alliance-building with the left-wing parties and movements that had hitherto rejected him. He brought to the fragmented and dispirited elements of the non-communist left not only his own eloquence, energy and proclaimed commitment to France's republican traditions, but also a shrewd appreciation of the realities of power. Most important, he offered to behave with cold ruthlessness and to begin the process of alliance-building with the left-wing parties and movements that had hitherto rejected him. He brought to the fragmented and dispirited elements of the non-communist left not only his own eloquence, energy and proclaimed commitment to France's republican traditions, but also a shrewd appreciation of the realities of power. Most important, he offered to behave with cold ruthlessness and to begin the process of alliance-building with the left-wing parties and movements that had hitherto rejected him.

Mitterrand's long march to power through the institutions of the Fifth Republic began with the 1965 presidential contest. His very isolation made him an acceptable (because expendable) stalking horse for the big battalions of the communist and socialist parties, in a contest which everyone expected de Gaulle to win easily. And win he did — but narrowly. The 45 per cent of the vote that Mitterrand won in round two suggested that there might be political life after de Gaulle and established his own position as the leader of the opposition to the regime. His subsequent strategy was dedicated to developing and consolidating his position as its guardian.

In 1971 he engineered the sort of tactical operation at which he excelled by getting himself elected first secretary of the Socialist Party, a position he held for 10 years. Under his supervision, the party became the vehicle for a generation of political talents and ambitions, who fell under the spell of a leader who could combine an inspirational warmth with chilling remoteness. In 1972 he negotiated an electoral and programmatic alliance with the still powerful Communist Party. This enabled him to mount an impressive second bid for the presidency after Pompidou's death in 1974. In a thrilling election, he lost by less than 1 per cent of the vote to the non-Gaullist conservative Giscard d'Estaing. When he told his voters that "your victory is inevitable" he was also thinking of himself.

These high points were, however, matched by lows that on more than one occasion seemed to leave him politically dead. He came very badly out of the events of May 1968, being rejected by radicals as just another machine politician and denounced by constitutionalists for what looked like an illegal bid for power. Ten years later his entire strategy for gaining power — the alliance with the communists — collapsed when the latter took fright at the advance of their socialist rivals and sabotaged the expected victory of the left in the 1978 parliamentary elections.



Toughness and imperturbability... Mitterrand survived charges of corruption but his haughty manner caused resentment

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Pen's National Front. Neither reflected well on Mitterrand's complacent invocations of republican virtues.

Abroad, the collapse of the Soviet Union left France once again exposed to the power of its neighbour across the Rhine. Mitterrand strove energetically to organise the new European disorder by a series of diplomatic moves, of which the most substantial was the 1991 Maastricht Treaty accelerating the process of Community integration.

Governments throughout Europe were in trouble by the 1990s and the long serving Mitterrand was now facing the same sort of voter fatigue that had contributed to de Gaulle's decline in the late 1960s. Increasing numbers of his fellow citizens came to believe that the arrogance of power had set in and Le Pen's denunciations of the corrupt left struck a nerve that transcended their tainted origin. A series of corruption scandals involving the Socialist Party and presidential associates did untold damage in a country which always wants to believe the worst of its rulers.

Mitterrand survived charges of personal corruption; but his haughty manner and his extravagant use of public money for public and private, ceremony caused great resentment. This might have mattered less had Mitterrand not made the disastrous miscalculation of celebrating his 10th anniversary in office by sacking his respected prime minister (and intimate enemy) Michel Rocard and replacing him with Edith Cresson, of whom it might politely be said that she was a long-time political friend.

Cresson proved totally unable to win the respect of the political nation, and of the nation *tout court*, and she dragged Mitterrand down with her. Less than a year later, in what was widely interpreted as a sign of declining presidential authority, Mitterrand was forced to replace her with another long time associate, the finance minister Pierre Bérégovoy. By now it was too late to restore the authority of the sober suited socialism that Mitterrand had come to symbolise. Despite an effective television intervention, Mitterrand was unable to achieve more than the narrowest of majorities in the referendum on Maastricht in September 1992.

Six months later the Socialist Party had done so much to create a rift in the parliamentary elections and plunged into a period of recrimination that did not spare its erstwhile hero. In a melancholy epilogue, his last Socialist prime minister and devoted admirer Bérégovoy shot himself out of despair that he too was accused of financial malpractice — and so some people said, that Mitterrand had done nothing to help him in his spiritual agony.

Once again Mitterrand's sheer toughness and imperturbability came to the surface. He remained in office, reading golfing and intellectualising when there was nothing else to do — and emphasising his continuing authority when, as in the case of Europe, there was. He collaborated closely with his conservative prime minister Edouard Balladur in the August 1993 crisis of the exchange rate mechanism and refused to accept that the European dream was dead.

His opponents continued to treat him with wary respect and his presidency did not suffer the fate of American equivalents like Carter. Machiavelli never became Lar. Though the revelations of his Vichy past inevitably posed the question of what, apart from his own star, he had ever believed in. The monumental architectural projects he imposed on Paris — the Bastille Opera, the Louvre Pyramid, the Défense Arc — constituted one form of legacy.

The reshaping, and perhaps ultimately the sabotage, of the political agenda of the French left is another. But perhaps the most enduring legacy of all will be the memory of his extraordinary career.

Peter Morris
François Maurice Marie Mitterrand, politician, born October 29, 1916; died January 8, 1996



Down but not out... facing another period of cohabitation with the right in 1993

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Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
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Finance Guardian



Tokyo banks to snub chunnel operator

Patrick Donovan
City Editor

EUROTUNNEL faces a resounding vote of no confidence from its Japanese bankers as they prepare to sell their debt in the cash-strapped Channel tunnel operator, totalling



To the tunnel... the Paris-bound Eurostar stops for the first time at the new Ashford International station yesterday

up to 25 per cent of the company's £8 billion borrowings. Tokyo-based institutions, which play a pivotal role in Eurotunnel's 230-strong banking consortium, are expected to sell their borrowings by the end of March, according to Klesch & Co, the problem-debt

trading experts. Their defection would come at a damaging time for Eurotunnel, which is trying to restructure its borrowings. Eurotunnel owes creditor banks some £3.45 billion, and posted losses of £464.5 million in the first half of this fiscal year. Last October banks agreed to sus-

pend interest payments on £2 billion of junior debt. Japanese banks, which include the Long-Term Credit Bank of Japan and the Bank of Tokyo, are looking to pull out of Eurotunnel because of the financial squeeze within their domestic market. A spokesman for Klesch

said: "In our view, Eurotunnel's negotiations with the banks will take a lot more time to conclude than a few weeks. This being the end of the financial year, or close to that, for Japanese banks, the banks are more likely to dispose of loan loss provisions either at the end of the current financial

year or at the beginning of the next financial year. Despite its financial problems, Eurotunnel still continues to build up business, with a record 73,000 people using the Eurostar train service between Brussels and London in December, according to figures published yesterday.

Notebook

Policies grenade finally detonates



Edited by Alex Brummer

THE pensions mis-selling scandal, in which hundreds of thousands of people were enticed out of sound occupational schemes into personal pensions, is the most damaging of the Conservative era. The Government had hoped that the matter could be settled quietly through the creeping self-regulatory system in which the buck is passed from the Securities and Investments Board to the Personal Investment Authority to the big providers, like the Prudential and the TSB, and the thousands of smaller distributors in the independent financial sector. Even though the first and most urgent cases were meant to be settled by the end of last year — and there are more deadlines creeping up — the result has been stalemate.

The companies, most of which are due to complete the construction of their networks by about 1998, must be prepared for competition from the likes of British Telecom from early next decade. So far the industry has reached about 6 million homes in the UK and signed up some 1.2 million television subscribers and 1.4 million telephone customers. But even this dual revenue stream will be looking for huge start-up costs. At present there are about 14 cable companies owning, between them, more than 140 franchises. Directors searching for ways of maximising returns will be looking for economies of scale. Most industry observers expect the number of cable operators in the UK will be down to fewer than eight at the turn of the century through takeovers and mergers. As increasing numbers of employees are shown the door, a privileged group will be crossing the Atlantic to well-paid jobs. Those managers who developed joint cable TV and telephone services in the UK — a world first — will get cases were meant to be settled by the end of last year — and there are more deadlines creeping up — the result has been stalemate.

German bargain

IN CONSERVATIVE mythology, Germany is the biggest reservoir in Europe of outmoded corporatist answers to the most pressing economic questions such as unemployment. But as Frankfurt newspaper reports yesterday disclosed an increase of 231,000 in Germany's unemployed to 3.79 million in December and the winter total heading over the 4 million mark, an innovative solution is being the centrepiece of top-level talks between the union IG Metall and employers. Europe's biggest union wants corporate Germany to agree through an Alliance for Jobs to take on 30,000 long-term jobless people in each of the next three years, in return accepting that they will be paid far less than the going rate. Work beyond the basic 35-hour week would be recompensed by increased leisure, not paid overtime. The employers' version of job-creating flexibility would, by contrast, cut basic pay to a fixed minimum, topped up by special supplements and personal bonuses. But they, too, see that a deal with unions on more flexible working patterns as well as pay is an essential component of the solution to Germany's structural problems.

Noisy necklace

THE mobile phone's transition into a fashionable item continues apace. Motorola has just launched what it describes as a "wearable" phone, weighing 3.1 ounces and strung like a diamond pendant from a loop round the neck. It may be the smallest and lightest phone so far, but it's got a long way to go in the fashion stakes before De Beers has to worry.

Cable cuts

FURTHER job losses in the cable industry must be expected this year as operators seek to maximise returns during the few remaining years of their local monopolies.

Stock Exchange pressured into consulting on reforms

Patrick Donovan
City Editor

THE besieged Stock Exchange, which last week bowed to City pressure by sacking its chief executive Michael Lawrence, is now telling major brokers it is prepared to consult with the entire London market on its controversial reform programme. Mr Lawrence was forced to resign because of City anger over his failure to sound out views on his plans for the biggest shake-up in the London market since "Big Bang", nearly 10 years ago. He infuriated the City establishment by announcing that the Stock Market should introduce "order driven" share trading to the London market, which currently operates a "quote driven" dealing service.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 2.02	France 7.40	Italy 2.406	Singapore 2.16
Austria 15.10	Germany 2.1700	Malta 0.54	South Africa 5.48
Belgium 44.30	Greece 364.00	Netherlands 2.4300	Spain 122.00
Canada 2.05	Hong Kong 11.79	New Zealand 2.30	Sweden 10.11
Cyprus 0.6975	India 54.99	Norway 8.60	Switzerland 1.74
Denmark 8.40	Ireland 0.9400	Portugal 226.00	Turkey 18.245
Finland 4.85	Israel 4.65	Saudi Arabia 5.78	USA 1.5100

In 1985 the scandal of the Rainbow Warrior was shrugged aside

GRANADA will today raise its bid for Fortis by as much as 15 per cent to around 370p a share, valuing the company at £3.5 billion. Its long-awaited move is calculated to play on chief executive Gerry Robinson's appeal to City fund managers but is still seen as insufficient to secure an outright knockout. A five-hour meeting between Granada's executives and City backers broke up shortly before 5pm last night, heightening speculation that Granada had secured sufficient firepower from its underwriters. Later in the evening, Granada was lining up support from its main underwriters — BZW, ABN Amro and Chemical Bank — to secure backing for the deal. Behind them are ranged up to 18 other sub-underwriters — all committed to Granada. Under the takeover rules, Granada, which launched its original 321p a share bid on November 22, had until today to improve the terms of its offer. Key to the raised bid is Mr Robinson's reputation for not overpaying for companies. Two years ago, he snapped up rival ITV contractor, London Weekend Television, for £600 million, and is certain to enhance that reputation if he wins Fortis at this price. Despite Mr Robinson's support among City fund managers, the general consensus in the Square Mile is that Fortis has fought a doggy campaign to repel Granada, culminating in last week's £800 million giveaway to shareholders. After that, most City analysts expected Granada to come back with an improved offer, although there was also

The battle for Forte

Granada to up ante today

Alan King

GERANADA chairman Gerry Robinson is to increase his offer for Fortis this morning. But it is unlikely to be a knockout blow, with the City predicting the battle will be a close-run thing, even at a higher price. That said, Granada differs from many aggressors in that the takeover is not crucial to its future. Losing, either by walking away or seeing Fortis shareholders turn down a higher price, would be a disappointment to Mr Robinson and his colleagues. But it would not throw the group into turmoil. Takeovers have helped to fuel Granada's recovery from a turn-of-the-decade trough, but defeat in this attempt



Playing it cool... Granada chief Gerry Robinson

speculation that the company would walk away from the deal, or raise it by a contemptuously small amount. Granada shares closed down 4p last night at 643p, valuing the group's original cash-and-paper offer at 328p, and indicating that the market expects Mr Robinson to come back with a higher offer. Fortis shares closed down 1p, at 344p, with almost four million shares traded. Granada received a boost when Max Dolding, leisure analyst at broker James Capel, attacked Fortis's defence strategy. In a circular likely to be scoured by institutional shareholders of both companies, Mr Dolding said Fortis had "done little to convince shareholders" of its ability to develop its long-term profitability, aside from the generally expected improvement in the British hotel market. Meanwhile, Fortis attempted to put out a spoiler on Granada's efforts, issuing a writ against Henry Staunton, Granada's finance director, for comments attributed to him in yesterday's Times. Fortis said a quote attributed to Mr Staunton, in which he is reported to have said that Fortis's defence document — issued last Tuesday — was "designed to mislead", sug-

gested that Fortis's directors had broken the Financial Services Act 1986. Fortis's lawyers, Linklaters & Paine, said that unless Mr Staunton published a "full retraction and apology" by 5pm yesterday afternoon, it would "start legal action". Under Fortis's demands, Mr Staunton has a fortnight to respond to the writ, which also seeks an agreement not to repeat the comments and "substantial" damages for Fortis. Granada insiders insisted that Mr Staunton was "incredibly relaxed" about the writ, confirming he had gone into last-minute talks on the improved offer.

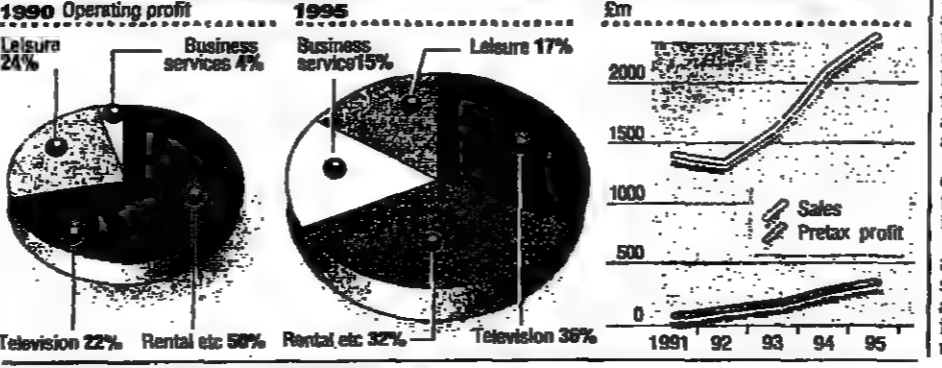
Group can cope with bid's failure

Outlook
Roger Cowe

GERANADA chairman Gerry Robinson is to increase his offer for Fortis this morning. But it is unlikely to be a knockout blow, with the City predicting the battle will be a close-run thing, even at a higher price. That said, Granada differs from many aggressors in that the takeover is not crucial to its future. Losing, either by walking away or seeing Fortis shareholders turn down a higher price, would be a disappointment to Mr Robinson and his colleagues. But it would not throw the group into turmoil. Takeovers have helped to fuel Granada's recovery from a turn-of-the-decade trough, but defeat in this attempt

would still leave other options in a pretty solid business. Before Mr Robinson's recent deals, takeover success was plentiful, but turning the acquisitions into successful businesses was not. For example, P&O gave Granada a geographic expansion of the TV rental business as a dead end. More recently, the creation of Europe's largest computer servicing operation turned out less attractive in practice than on paper. The latest spat has been more successful — so far. LWT has given the television operations greater scale, and allowed some economies of scale to be realised. The purchase of Sutcliffe catering and Spring Grove from P&O gave Granada a substantial base in services to business, while last year's acquisition of Pavilion Leisure beefed up the group's motorway service activity. All this has nevertheless

The changing face of Granada



Legal victory for victims of pensions mis-selling

Jill Papworth

HUNDREDS of thousands of victims of personal pension mis-selling yesterday won the choice to seek compensation through the courts following a landmark judgment quashing a move by insurers to block legal action against them. Five pensions providers — the Prudential, GAN Life, TSB, Hill Samuel and Irish Life — had applied to the Bristol Mercantile Court for proceedings brought against them by trades unions on behalf of their members to be "stayed" pending the completion of the pensions review launched by City regulators,

which is already expected to cost the industry at least £2 billion. But Judge Raymond Jack yesterday rejected the life companies' applications. The life companies had argued that if the actions launched against them by Bristol solicitors Ringrose Wharton were allowed to proceed, it would open the floodgates to prosecutions from other investors and the courts would not be able to cope. The judge ruled that this was not the case. They also argued that the unions funding these cases — the GMB and the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) — were not acting properly in their involvement. Judge Jack

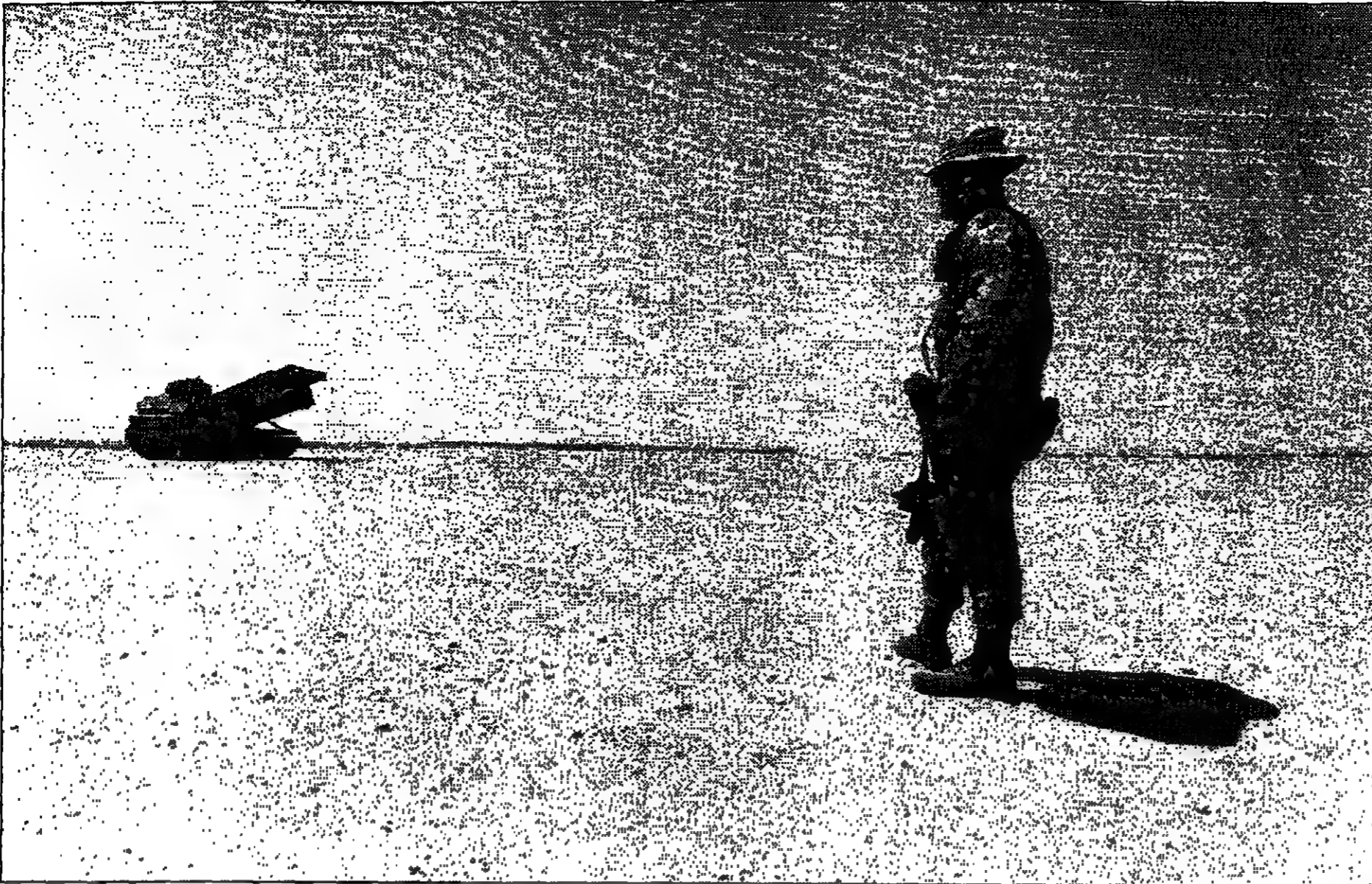
ruled that it was reasonable for unions to represent their members through legal action. The judge also refused the life companies leave to appeal to the Court of Appeal, although they do have 28 days in which to contest that. Philip Ryley, head of the pensions unit at Ringrose Wharton, said: "This judgment is a victory for all investors who do not wish to be bound by the life industry's review timetable. In broader terms, it is a victory for choice. Up until now the industry's regulators have defined how and when individual claims are to be reviewed." Some 74 cases are immedi-

ately affected by yesterday's ruling and will come for a directions hearing before the Bristol Mercantile Court on February 22. A further 250 more Ringrose Wharton clients, most of them GMB or RCN members, are now expected to issue writs against life companies soon. Thousands more of the estimated 1 million-plus investors who were victims of personal pension mis-selling in the late eighties and early nineties are now likely to consider going to court. Many are dissatisfied with the progress of the regulators' review, which has been subject to delays. As Judge Jack pointed out, the first deadline for dealing with top-priority

cases, December 31, 1995, set by the Securities and Investments Board, the senior City watchdog, and the Personal Investment Authority, "has already been missed by some margin". Investors are also turning to the courts because they could lose the legal right to do so if they leave it longer than six years since they opted out, transferred or did not join an occupational pension scheme and bought a personal pension plan instead. The judgment meant that investors "don't have to be railroaded by a review process which some people regard as off the rails", said Robert Wharton of Ringrose Wharton.

A delighted Bill Day, GMB pensions officer, said: "The Government now has a duty to let the public know they can seek compensation." An official of the RCN said: "This judgment will give some of our members, who were tempted out of the NHS occupational scheme six years ago, the chance to recover their losses as soon as possible." The Prudential said it was disappointed with the outcome and would be considering an appeal. Its main concern, said one official, was that money reserved for the SIB review would be diverted if the scale of litigation following the ruling increased sharply.

£6bn acquisition intensifies shake-up of US defence industry as Pentagon orders fall



Masters of war... Loral's Multiple Launch Rocket System was put through its paces during the Gulf war. The company also makes Sidewinder air-to-air missiles. PHOTOGRAPH: ROGER HITCHINGS

Lockheed deal stirs up storm

Mark Tran in New York

LOCKHEED Martin, the US defence conglomerate, sent a warning shot to its rivals that the struggle has begun in earnest for the survival of the fittest in the post-Cold war US defence industry.

Electronic unit of General Motors to make their own deals. There has been speculation that Boeing and McDonnell will merge their helicopter businesses.

entire transaction comes to more than \$6 billion, the companies said. Lockheed has five areas of business: aeronautics, electronics, energy and environment, information and technology and space and strategic missiles.

Fact file: Lockheed Martin
CREATED by the 1994 merger of Lockheed and Martin Marietta, Lockheed Martin is America's largest defence firm, which aptly describes itself as a highly diversified advanced technology company.

Fact file: Loral
LORAL concentrates on defence electronics, communications and space weapons systems. Based in New York, it employs 38,000 and has annual sales of \$6.7 billion.

Internet access to explode into £1bn business

Nicholas Bannister Technology Editor

ACCESS to the Internet will become a near £1 billion business in Britain by the end of the century, according to a report yesterday by City brokers Durlacher.

people connected to the net by early this year, rising to more than 200 million by 2002. A Durlacher spokesman said the firm expected the number of UK corporate subscribers, linked to the Internet through leased lines, to rise to about 40,600 by 2000, while dial-up subscribers would top 5.5 million.

Auditors seek pause on new board controls

Roger Cowe

CALL for a two-year moratorium on new corporate governance measures was made yesterday by auditors, who are still struggling to work out how to comply with the final aspects of the Cadbury Report of December 1994.

Mr Flaistowe said it was very difficult to define "effectiveness" but an alternative form of words would make it easier for directors to report on companies' control systems, and for auditors to report on their statements in annual reports.

News in brief

Nynex CableComms decimates staff

NYNEX CableComms, Britain's second-largest cable company, is to shed more than 10 per cent of its workforce as part of an economy drive.

Seaboard bid cleared

THE Government yesterday cleared the way for the second takeover of a regional electricity company by an American utility when Trade and Industry Secretary Ian Lang waved through Central and South West Corporation's agreed £1.6 billion bid for Sussex-based Seaboard.

Vauxhall ballot

VAUXHALL car workers are to be balloted on a three-year deal which would include a pay rise of up to 4.5 per cent this year, inflation-linked increases in the following two years and a cut in the basic working week by one hour to 38.

Jaguar swindler jailed

A BUSINESSMAN who paid hundreds of thousands of pounds in bribes to a corrupt Jaguar employee in return for lucrative artwork contracts was jailed for a year yesterday.

Enron nears India deal

THE row over India's biggest foreign investment project yesterday moved towards resolution after the state of Maharashtra accepted Enron's proposal for a \$2.5 billion (£1.5 billion), 2,450-megawatt power plant.

Despite predictions, feelgood factor less than universal

Consumers splashing out again

Larry Elliott Economics Editor

FRESH evidence that consumer spending is on an upward trend emerged today when the British Retail Consortium reported that Christmas takings in the high street were up by more than 4 per cent on December 1994.

drink and personal computers sector reported particularly buoyant trading, while the post-Christmas sales were generally seen as successful.

leaved that consumer spending would provide the key to Britain's economic performance this year, but added that any real spurt would be delayed until the second half of the year.

Redland profit warning casts gloom on UK building sector

Tony May

THE Redland building materials and construction group issued a profit warning yesterday which dealt a fresh blow to the beleaguered UK building industry.

Two-year brake on growth forecast by car industry

Chris Barrie

GROWTH in car production will fall this year because the pace of economic growth is set to slow, the motor industry predicted yesterday.

Stuart Wallis... respected as a doctor to ailing firms

Pauline Springett

STUART Wallis, the former chief executive of Fisons, has become non-executive chairman of the publisher Lloyd's of London Press.

Lloyd's List woos ex-Fisons chief

Pauline Springett

LLP, whose flagship publication, Lloyd's List, is the world's oldest international daily newspaper, made £4 million pre-tax profit in 1994 after several years of undisclosed losses.

Stuart Wallis... respected as a doctor to ailing firms

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American Football

Dark-horse Colts stay the course

Mark Tran in New York

The Indianapolis Colts defied the odds when they stunned the Kansas City Chiefs 10-7 at Arrowhead Stadium to earn a place in the American Conference championship game.



Raising a gallop... the Colts' running back Lamont Warren evades the Chiefs' Mark Collins

Golf

Runner-up Faldo moves slowly up the rankings

David Davies

NICK FALDO, second on Sunday in the first event of the 1996 US Tour, the Mercedes Championship in California, moved up one place to seventh in the Sony Rankings as a result.

American, who is one of the tour's quicker players, was immediately incensed. He said to the official: "Fine, put me on the clock. It's not me, it's just the field and I playing. I'm not playing slow and it's not me that takes so long to pull the trigger."

ber Faldo, whose 1995 season was a severe disappointment, talked of plenty of hard work in store on certain aspects of his swing, in particular his hip action. On Sunday night he said: "I am reaping the benefits from all my recent practice."

Leicester runners and riders

Table listing Leicester runners and riders for various events, including names, times, and positions.

Lingfield all-weather card with guide to the form

Table listing Lingfield all-weather racing card, including race numbers, names, and form guides.

Racing

No room for Celtic Swing in World Cup

Graham Rock

CIGAR, the top American horse, is the favourite for the inaugural running of the Dubai World Cup on March 27 but Celtic Swing, who won the French Derby, has not been chosen.

Front Street leads the way

FRONT STREET, a smooth course-and-distance winner last month, heads the ante-post market at 7-2 with the sponsors for the Victor Chandler Chase at Ascot on Saturday, writes Graham Rock.

s List wood... ons chief

Results

Table listing racing results from various tracks, including race numbers, names, and winners.

Advertisement for Rambo retired, featuring a photo of a horse and text about a Cambridge winner.

Soccer

United set to step in for Boban

Ian Ross and Don Best

ZVONIMIR BOBAN, the Croatian international, may be about to end Manchester United's search for a natural successor to the Ukrainian winger Andrei Kanchelskis.

In one of the season's more curious transfer deals, the veteran striker Lee Chapman last night rejoined Leeds United.

Chapman strengthens a severely depleted squad. David White and Noel Whelan have been sold.

Notts County yesterday signed the striker Tony Battersby for £200,000 from Sheffield United.

Scottish Premier Div: Hibs 1, Aberdeen 2

Glass breaks Hibs

Patrick Glenn

IF KENNY Dalgleish gets serious about Aberdeen's teenage midfielder Stephen Glass, he will have to make another hole in Jack Walker's pocket-money Blackburn's director of football.

Hibs' challenge appeared to be snuffed out as abruptly as a candle.

Glass, an intelligent and skilful young player, pulled a shot from the left side of the far post, but then supplied the devastating centre from which Miller scored.

Aberdeen needed a line-man's testimony for their second, after Dodds headed Miller's corner from the left over the line from six yards.

The match became utterly wretched for Hibs when McGinlay was sent off when he appeared to back-hand Glass early in the second half.

Rugby Union

Canada's cap in the ring

Robert Armstrong

CANADA will shortly join Italy and Romania on a shortlist of ambitious candidates seeking entry into an expanded Five Nations Championship for the 1997-98 season and beyond.

The Canadian Rugby Union is convinced that the best way to strengthen its overseas fixtures is on a regular basis to persuade the Five Nations committee that Canada should be included in the game's oldest international tournament.

The Rugby Football Union, which hopes to get the championship dates switched to March/April from 1998 onwards, has undertaken to look positively at the options for broadening the scope of the event.

some of which might be played on Sundays instead of the traditional Saturday double-headers.

Canada's enhanced competitive standing in the last two World Cups and their capacity to host national tours by France, England and Wales have created an aura of credibility among the Five Nations in recent seasons that could pave the way for their acceptance.

"Change is what we are about at Twickenham, and I think that also applies to the Five Nations Championship," said Hallett.

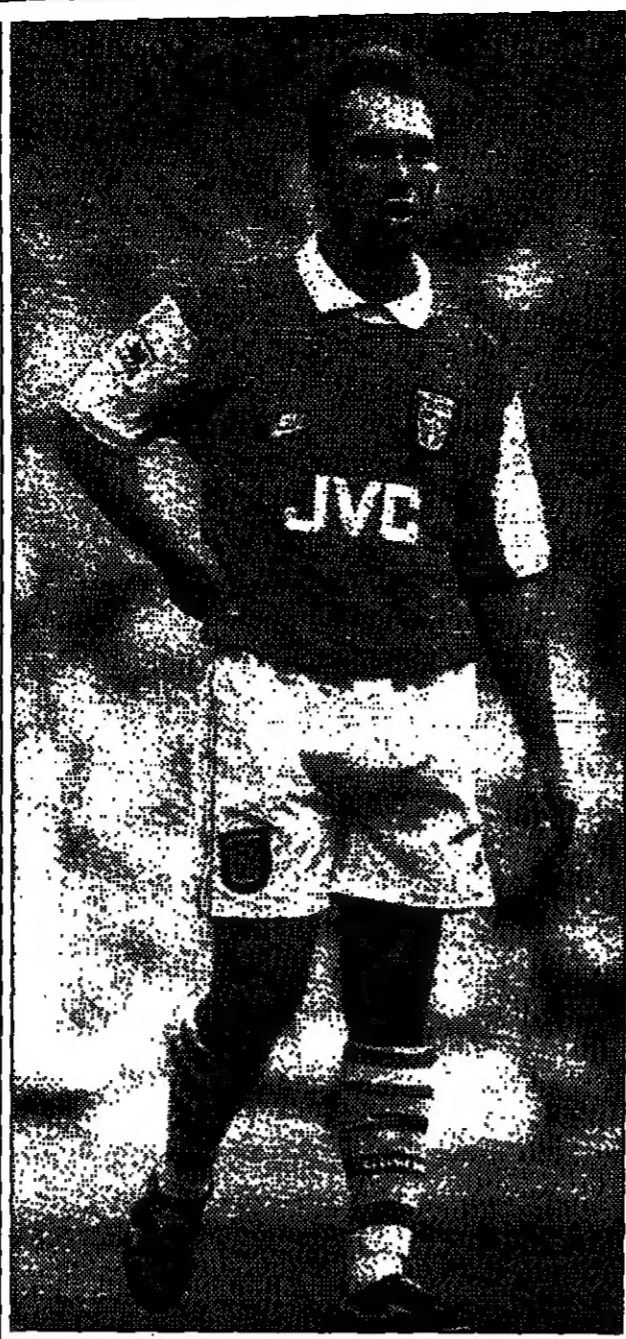
Canada and European countries such as Italy and Romania, with whom we have played a couple of times in recent seasons, do merit careful consideration. A lot of different factors — for instance the format of the championship, and better scheduling of fixtures — are likely to go into the melting-pot.

Canada's victories over France and Wales, achieved after they reached the quarter-finals of the 1991 World Cup, put them on an equal competitive footing with the European nations after three decades of intermittent Test fixtures.

Likewise, Italy's 29-17 victory over Scotland in what was technically an A international last Saturday will have boosted their status among the Five Nations. The Italians, who caused England some embarrassment in the last two World Cups, have become regular visitors to Britain and Ireland in the Nineties.

Wales, who play host to Italy in Cardiff next Tuesday, and France are likely to look favourably upon an Italian application, as all three nations have been involved in this season's inaugural Heineken European Cup.

Last spring France and Italy hatched an ultimately unsuccessful plan to host the 1999 World Cup. The next time they put their heads together the Six Nations Championship is certain to be high on the agenda.



Spiked Gunners... David Platt (left) has yet to justify his £4.75 million fee; Glenn Heider (above) has yet to provide the service required; Dennis Bergkamp (right) was called up by Holland and got injured; Tony Adams (below left) picked up a suspension and a stomach bug; Steve Bould (below right) got suspended and injured



Old guard on way out at Arsenal

Martin Thorpe discovers that Bruce Rioch is running out of patience and is ready to ring the changes at Highbury

HIS patience had finally given out after the home defeat by Wimbledon, two days before the new year began. Bruce Rioch had been so alarmed at Arsenal's deteriorating form — one win in the previous seven league games — that he kept the team back in the dressing room for 70 minutes after the final whistle.

The thought of such a disciplinarian as Rioch confining himself to the niceties of debating-society rules in such a tense situation is difficult to accommodate. And indeed, according to sources close to the club, the meeting was far stormier than Rioch admitted. There were raised voices and at least one player went eyeball to eyeball in a shouting match with the manager.

Cup quarter-final tie at home to Newcastle, which Bergkamp, Bould and Platt could all miss with injuries. Rioch had hinted at his unhappiness with the team after the December 16 home draw with Chelsea. He said five months of appraisal had shown him just how much rebuilding work was required; it was time to stop starting up George Graham's side and model his own.

With Rioch reputedly having yielded up a serious injury and Platt was still recovering from a cartilage operation. Since that game against Wednesday, Arsenal have been a shadow of their early-season selves, a problem compounded by the recent absence through suspension of Bould and Adams and the drain on team confidence that comes from defeat in three of the last four league games.

One of Arsenal's biggest worries has been Platt's alarming loss of form. He scored twice in his first four outings, but a series of injuries from his operation has been wandering through games like a lost soul at a party.

land, Parouk had already picked up a serious injury and Platt was still recovering from a cartilage operation. Since that game against Wednesday, Arsenal have been a shadow of their early-season selves, a problem compounded by the recent absence through suspension of Bould and Adams and the drain on team confidence that comes from defeat in three of the last four league games.

"This is the first time I have had to take this action," he admitted. "But the performance merited it; so much was missing from our game. The time was right; things had to be said."

The immediate response has not been encouraging. The team were comfortably defeated at Newcastle in the league, and on Saturday in the FA Cup struggled to draw at home to Sheffield United, second bottom of the First Division.

Tomorrow comes what could be the pivotal point of Arsenal's season, a Coca-Cola Cup quarter-final tie at home to Newcastle, which Bergkamp, Bould and Platt could all miss with injuries.

He will appear at the Rioch Cup meeting at Birmingham's National Indoor Arena on February 10 and the McDonald's Britain v France match at Glasgow's Kelvin Hall on February 24.

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Teamtalk The Independent News Reports Service Call 0891 33 77+ Arsenal 06 Ipswich Town 19 Sheffield United 15 Aston Villa 11 Leeds United 03 Sheffield Wed. 14 Birm. City 34 Leicester City 35 Southampton 20 Blackburn 21 Liverpool 04 Stoke City 30 Bolton 36 Man. City 02 Sunderland 27 Brentford 24 Man. United 01 Tottenham Hot. 07 Burnley 31 Middlesbrough 23 West Ham 12 Chelsea 08 Millwall 20 Wimbledon 26 Coventry City 17 Newcastle Utd 16 Wolves 37 Derby County 28 Norwich City 18 Celtic 09 Everton 05 Nottm. Forest 13 Rangers 10 Hudd. Town 32 QPR 25

Pools Forecast Table with columns for Third Division, Football League Premier Division, Football League First Division, Football League Second Division, and Football League Third Division. Lists teams and their predicted positions.

Athletics

Atlanta hint in Christie's indoor plans

Stephen Bierley

CONJECTURE that Linton Christie might, after all, defend his 100 metres Olympic title in Atlanta grew yesterday when he agreed to run at two indoor meetings in Britain next month.

He will appear at the Rioch Cup meeting at Birmingham's National Indoor Arena on February 10 and the McDonald's Britain v France match at Glasgow's Kelvin Hall on February 24.

Given continued fitness Christie, who turns 36 in April, clearly could earn big money on this summer's Grand Prix circuit, although another major championship might be one too many. He lost his world title in Gothenburg last year with an injury.

One suggestion is that he could compete in the Olympic relay and thus put one or two of Britain's younger sprinters in with a chance of a bronze medal this summer and perhaps something better if the Americans were to drop the baton.

Sport in brief

Rugby Union

The Heineken European Cup is likely to be expanded to 20 clubs to include sides from England and Scotland next season, the competition director Vernon Pugh confirmed.

Table Tennis

The former world champion Jorgen Persson is the top name in a strong entry for the Olympic qualifying tournament starting in Manchester tomorrow, writes Richard Jago.

Cricket

TOUR MATCH: Warwickshire v Lancashire at Old Trafford, Manchester, 10.11.95. Lancashire 110, Warwickshire 110. Lancashire won by 10 runs.

American Football

NFL Week 16: Dallas Cowboys 30, New York Giants 17. Dallas won by 13 points.

Ice Hockey

BRITISH LEAGUE: Premier Division. Nottingham 3, Sheffield 1. Nottingham won by 2 goals.

Tennis

TASMANIAN WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT: (Hobart) First round: J. Wessner (Aus) 6-2, 6-4; M. Hocking (Aus) 6-2, 6-4.

Results

SOCCER: Premier Division. Arsenal 2, Liverpool 1. Arsenal won by 1 goal.

Basketball

NBA: Vancouver 90, LA Clippers 101; Boston 96, Dallas 117; LA Lakers 90, Denver 96.

Fixtures

SOCCER: PREMIER LEAGUE: Third Division. Gillingham v Chester 10.11.95. Gillingham away.

Rugby Union

BRITISH AND IRELAND: Final place may be decided by a play-off between a second Italian club and the Romanian champions.

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Cricket

Smith in, Smith out, White back, bring on the motley

Mike Selvey on a different England going into the opening day-nighter in Cape Town

THEY came in their thousands on Sunday evening to hear the fat man sing, but Luciano Pavarotti rather missed a trick by cutting On With The Motley from his open-air performance in the wetlands of Stellenbosch. That would certainly have been helpful — especially as some reports said the "King of the High Ce" bottled the finish to Nessun Dorma — because this evening, here under the lights of Newlands, England and South Africa jetison their Test-match white for coloured pyjamas and the first of God help us, seven one-day games in a row. There is method in this apparent madness. When the United Cricket Board of South Africa devised this winter's schedule it was mindful that a public which had been allowed to gorge on one-day cricket during the isolation years had to be led back towards Test matches. The idea, as the board's man-

aging director Dr Ali Bacher put it, was to create a Test match culture. To do that, it was felt, the distraction of limited-overs internationals had to be packaged and sold as the Test series rather than interwoven into it, as is the interminable Australian World Series tournament. Despite the weather, Test attendances were good, culminating in the record sell-out in the final match last week. Indeed, according to figures released yesterday, crowds for the rain-affected series nearly hit target levels despite the loss of almost a third of the possible playing days. "We budgeted for 375,000 in 23 days and we got 265,000 in 17 days," said Bacher. "It indicates tremendous support for Test cricket." In addition to that, of course, separating the series allows players to focus mind and channel energies into one form of cricket at a time rather than mix-and-match-



Called up... thinker Reeve (left) and all-rounder White

will start here with what he considers to be his strongest side and take it from there. Jack Russell's Test glove-work was exemplary and his batting adhesive — was suggested he open the batting to enable Alec Stewart to concentrate on his wicketkeeping — but a balanced one-day side demands that Stewart resume his wicketkeeping role. However, now he does so on the understanding that Russell's Test place is secure. In addition to Stewart, then, England's best batting side certainly includes Atherton, Thorpe, Hick and Fairbrother, as for today. Not too much should be read into the omission of Ramprakash or Robin Smith, as both are still in the frame for this series and the World Cup beyond. The bowling today is in the hands of Cork, Martin and Gough, with back-up from Neil Smith's off-spin and the all-rounders White and Reeve. Reeve's presence as one of the world's outstand-

England well trained for one-day rush

David Hopps sees World Cup success taking the edge off Test-match failure

DISORIENTATION often sets in on long cricket tours. Darren Gough, more susceptible than most, was once asked on a tour to South Africa by England A how he would like to spend the next day. "I'd let the lads go down the beach," he replied with out hesitation. "They've worked hard and they deserve it." Then he was reminded that he was in Pretoria. Gough happily concedes that geography was never his strong suit, but England, who have completed yet another overseas Test series by becoming history, might welcome a change of subject, even one which does not seem so timetable to a ludicrous extent. To reach the World Cup final in Lahore in mid-March, England first have to negotiate a frenzied 9½ weeks consisting of 15 one-day internationals in 14 towns and cities. At one point they actually play back-to-back fixtures in Feshawar, and if they recover from the shock they might find time to unpack a suitcase. In terms of World Cup preparation the South Africa one-day games are entirely superfluous. The World Cup contrives to serve as its own warm-up, with all 10 countries playing five qualifying matches just for the sake of losing the bottom side in each group — simple time to sort out teething problems. Constant travelling, disturbed sleep, rushed meals and hasty practice sessions mean that to escape injury to a key player will be an achievement in itself. Having lost the Test series it is as if England are setting off on a major bender. Why drink to forget when you can just hop on to another aeroplane? In between switching continents the players will return to England for about a fortnight, when they will endeavour to reacquire themselves with the essentials of life such as their names, addresses and PIN numbers, and which child wears the little green outfit with the Postman Pat motif. At least the one-day series in Australia can be relied upon for the same

tomfoolery. The lucky two-some among Australia, Sri Lanka and West Indies who qualify for the final of the current Benson and Hedges World Series will play 11 matches each before the World Cup begins in mid-February. England can console themselves that this is what their first-class upbringing prepares them for. The county game has long been detrimental to the development of a successful Test side, both in the amount of cricket played and in the preponderance of one-day matches. England's attitudes were reportedly exemplary in South Africa. Michael Atherton was far more in tune with the mood of his squad than he was in Australia a year ago. But how many times did Sky TV reveal batsmen struggling to locate their off stump or bowlers lacking sparkle, the simple delights of bowling long forgotten? An over-enthusiastic domestic programme educates our top players in keeping going and in preserving energy whenever possible; it does not foster the pursuit

Canoeing

In the first of an occasional series on Olympic hopefuls, Peter Nichols reports on a remarkable dynasty

Train-load of paddlers on the right track



WERE Fladbury in the United States, it would be called Trainville by now.

Twenty-five years ago David Train arrived in the village and transformed it with his passion for paddling, founding the Fladbury Canoe Club. In its brief existence the club has nurtured more than 70 international paddlers (junior and senior), and Train, through a tale that would grace a George Eliot novel, created a paddling dynasty.

With three children and three stepchildren, all of whom have paddled for Britain, David Train is worth a story on his own, but this is not that story.

It was a Hungarian, Istvan Vaskuti, who unlocked one of the secrets in the autumn of 1960. The nine times world champion could not speak much English but that September, as Andrew explains, "We taught him English and the things that he taught us are now changing the sport in Britain".

stage — an Olympic history that goes back to 1896 — and not once has a Briton struck gold or anything else. It is a long time to go without an Olympic medal; it is a long time to go without a near miss. If you ever need to rethink your life, climb into a Canadian canoe. It presents a unique set of problems. The left-right, blade-twisting, shoulder-rolling motion of the kayak is the common perception of canoeing. The Canadian canoeists' knuckles in the boat and above backwaters, just like the Indians in the Western movies. It is difficult and simple at the same time, more difficult and simple than you would ever think.

The brothers Train took it to the extent that by 1981, when they were still teenagers, they contested their first world championship in the 10,000 metres and finished seventh. The distance events could have been their future but had a short tenure in the mainstream of the sport and, crucially, are now excluded from the Olympics. A shame really, because in the intervening years the brothers Train have proved to be just about the best paddlers in the world.

It was a Hungarian, Istvan Vaskuti, who unlocked one of the secrets in the autumn of 1960. The nine times world champion could not speak much English but that September, as Andrew explains, "We taught him English and the things that he taught us are now changing the sport in Britain".

The message that persuaded Stephen to come out of retirement and fired up Andrew again was that, at the moment when the paddle digs into the water — the paddler's weight must go into the paddle. It was simple. Even you understand what he means. Put your weight into the paddle as you pull through the water and you are making the boat lighter and faster. So that is what made the Eastern bloc so good. Well, it couldn't all have been drugs.



Falling together... the Train crew (left to right), Mark, Stephen, David, Andrew and Rachel

on his own in the C1 10,000m. In 1966, Vaskuti encouraged a second change, moving Andrew who paddled on the left, to the back of the boat. The new set-up scared somebody, perhaps, because at the next world marathon championships in Amsterdam they found two holes drilled in the

bow of their canoe prior to the race. Plugged up, they still finished second. But the sprint times were improving. It seems bizarre that in the canoe world you can switch from racing at 42km to a single kilometre, but 3½ hours' and 3½ minutes' backward shovelling have one

thing in common: they are basically aerobic exercises. A week before they won the World Cup this year, the Trains finished fifth in the C2 1,000m at the world sprint championships, the best ever British sprint performance in a world championship. In Atlanta they will need to

break a 35-year drought if they are to beat the Hungarian favourites Horvath and Kolonics. They will perhaps need one more secret from the man who has taken them this far, another Hungarian... but whether Vaskuti has one last card to play remains to be seen.

'This is what their first-class upbringing prepares the players for'

of excellence. The formation this spring of the English Cricket Board (to replace the Test and County Cricket Board) offers an opportunity for change which the complacent and the traditionalists will combine to overlook. Such entrenched attitudes will continue to undermine England's Test performance, but in the World Cup they might actually prove beneficial. Quick forties by Stewart, Thorpe and Fairbrother; Reeve interfering wherever he is not welcome; Neil Smith's unerringly negative off-spin; and Gough scuzzing again in the form of cricket he most understands and loves; add such qualities to those already exhibited in the Test series by Atherton, Hick, Russell and Cork, and World Cup triumph is not out of the question. Considering the present mournful climate, the odds will never get better.

Lara decides to stay away

BRIAN LARA will not play county cricket this summer after all. Warwickshire are close to signing the South African pace bowler Shaun Pollock as their overseas player for next season and Lara's agent Jonathan Barnett yesterday ruled out the West Indian playing elsewhere in the championship. "Brian won't be playing county cricket next season," Barnett said. "We have a gentleman's agreement with

Warwickshire about the 1996 season and as far as I am concerned that agreement is going to be honoured." Sri Lanka's captain Arjuna Ranatunga said his side might be asked to field the controversial off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan during their tour of Australia. "It depends on what umpires we get," he said, adding that Muralitharan had not been ruled out of today's World Series clash with Australia in Melbourne.

Rugby League

Bentley puts Halifax before union return at Rotherham

JOHN BENTLEY, the Halifax and England winger, said yesterday that an "off the cuff" remark about a return to rugby union with Rotherham had been "blown out of proportion". He said he was excited about the advent of Super League and intended to fulfil the three-year contract he recently signed with Halifax. It was no secret, said Bentley, 29, that he would like to play for Rotherham, the Courage League Three club, in the closed season, "but nothing is decided yet as I've got Halifax's say-so first. One thing I can confirm, however, is that I will be at Halifax for the next three years." Nigel Wood, Halifax's chief executive, said Bentley had approached the board about the possibility of playing rugby union in the closed season. "Although still under discussion it is clear that certain financial and insurance considerations would be required to protect the club's investment in the player before this scenario could even be contemplated."

Warrington were beaten 80-0 in the Regal Trophy semi-finals by St Helens, a defeat which led to the resignation of their Australian coach Brian Johnson. Then on Sunday, under the control of Clive Griffiths, the Wales national coach, they were beaten 54-14 by the same opponents and had two men sent off.

Boxing

Supreme Court rejects Tyson rape appeal

THE Supreme Court has rejected an appeal by the former world heavyweight champion Mike Tyson seeking to overturn his 1992 conviction for rape. The 29-year-old Tyson, who has won two fights since his release from prison, was found guilty of raping Desiree Washington in his hotel room in Indianapolis in 1991 when she was an 18-year-old contestant in a beauty pageant. Tyson had been making a guest appearance at the contest and told Miss Washington he wanted to have sex with her. The rape occurred that night. Tyson, who at the age of 20 became the youngest fighter

to win the heavyweight title, was released from an Indiana prison on March 25 after serving about half of his six-year sentence. In his Supreme Court appeal claiming that his constitutional rights had been violated, Tyson challenged the now-discontinued state system under which prosecutors had the power to help select the judge who presided over his trial. The Harvard University law professor Alan Dershowitz also argued in the appeal that several defence witnesses had been improperly excluded from testifying at the trial. But the Supreme Court denied the appeal with-

out comment. The high court justices had in 1994 turned down a similar appeal. Brendan Ingle, the man who has guided Naseem Hamed to the world featherweight title, yesterday tipped Pete Reid, to go to the top as well. The 23-year-old from Birmingham, son of a football-mad father, has only one professional fight under his belt but Ingle believes the former world kick-boxing champion has shown enough potential in that knockout win and in the gymnasium. "He's quick can punch and can become British and European champion in three years," he said.

Ice Hockey

Superleague backers deny start will be delayed

ORGANISERS of a proposed all-professional domestic Superleague have denied that the starting date will be put back 12 months to September 1997. Speaking before yesterday's meeting in Manchester of the British League management committee, Robert Zeller, communications director of Ice Hockey Superleague Limited, said: "The original target launch date of next September is still viable." Further developments are likely on Thursday when the Superleague backers present more details of their propos-

als to a meeting of the British Ice Hockey Association council in London. Meanwhile, Cardiff Devils' Premier Division lead is down to a single point after Sheffield Steelers in second place and, one point behind them, Nottingham Panthers each picked up three points from two games over the weekend. Sheffield and Nottingham drew 3-3 in Nottingham on Saturday and Steelers beat Fife Flyers 9-1 on Sunday. Tony Hand, Nicky Chinn and Ron Shudra all scoring twice. Panthers beat a lacklustre Basingstoke Bison 5-3 thanks to four goals from their player-coach Mike Blaisdell. Devils' only game resulted

in a 9-1 hammering of the hapless Flyers in Cardiff. The former NHL player Doug Small's return to the British League for the Welsh club, against the side he played for two seasons ago, was marked by a facial cut from an accidental high stick wielded by Fife's Richard Dingwall. Nottingham are the latest club to look to Europe for reinforcements in the wake of the Bosman case: the Finnish defenceman Pasi Uunkuri flew in for a trial yesterday. Durham Wasps are hoping international clearance for another Finn, Mikko Niemi, will arrive in time for him to make his debut against Sheffield tomorrow.

Cricket

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SportsGuardian

Clubs set to take on Uefa

Martin Thorpe

EUROPE's top clubs are on a collision course with Uefa over the number of foreigners they can field in European matches. The clubs may threaten to start their own European competition if they do not get their way.

European cup-winning clubs such as Manchester United, AC Milan, Bayern Munich, Real Madrid and Ajax will confront Uefa at a meeting in February.

They want Uefa to allow clubs to field an unlimited number of European Union nationals in European club matches. In line with the recent Bosman ruling, Uefa is demanding that clubs stick to the current rule of three foreigners — including EU nationals — plus two assimilated players.

"It's difficult to speculate what might happen at the meeting," said the Manchester United director Maurice Watkins, "but the top clubs have a lot of muscle. The recent trend is for Uefa to try and control football, but surely they are there to run the competitions within the law. And we feel the new laws following Bosman should be applied now."

The problem does not immediately affect British clubs as only Nottingham Forest are left in Europe and they currently do not have more than three foreigners. But other clubs face a dilemma if they wish to field more than three. To do so would almost certainly lead to Uefa banning them from European competition. But challenging the cup rules in court could also lead to a Uefa ban.

The Premier League held a seminar yesterday on the latest legal interpretation of the whole Bosman ruling. The FA, Football League and Professional Footballers' Association were also present, along with representatives of other sports.

The Premier League's legal view is that clubs cannot receive fees for out-of-contract players sold between EU countries. Whether this extends to transfers within a country will be discussed with the European Commission when the league visits Brussels on Thursday. The league is anxious to retain the current domestic system of transfer fees, which could be adopted Europe-wide.

RECORD-BREAKING FLY-HALF JOINS STRUGGLING LONDONERS



Formidable line-up... Lynagh flanked by Saracens' chief executive Mike Smith (left) and the millionaire Nigel Wray

PHOTOGRAPH: TOM JENKINS

Lynagh captured by Saracens

Ian Malin on the coup by the rugby union club who have found a millionaire benefactor

SARACENS yesterday announced English rugby union's most ambitious transfer since the sport became professional five months ago with the signing of the former Australia fly-half and captain Michael Lynagh. The capture of one of rugby's most glamorous names is on a par with soccer's Ruud Geullij joining Chelsea last year.

When Lynagh first visited England with an Australian Schools side 14 years ago he and his young team-mates were shooed off the Twickenham pitch by a jobsworth team to protect the hallowed turf. Next season the fly-half makes a return to London to a club whose council-owned ground is the exercise yard for half the dogs in Southgate. But now the 32-year-old Lynagh, who in those 14 years has run up an international record of 911 points, is being welcomed to the capital with open arms.

Saracens — whom he saw lose in the mud against Wasps last weekend — unveiled their new signing yesterday at a French restaurant in central London. The French connection led many to believe that the centre Philippe Sella was on his way to north London. Saracens, two places off the bottom of Courage League One, have been talking to both players, with Lynagh

last month agreeing to join them and Sella still weighing up rival offers from Harlequins and Wasps.

Lynagh, who has spent the past five years in Italy with Treviso, has signed a three-year deal believed to be worth at least £80,000 a year. But his present contract in Italy and Twickenham's 180-day moratorium means that the Queenslander will be unable to play until September.

Saracens, who in recent years have lost such players as Jason Leonard, Dean Ryan, Ben Clarke and Justin Cassell, are now turning the tables on their more illustrious rivals thanks to a £2.5 million injection of share capital from the millionaire businessman Nigel Wray. This month the Saracens and Ireland flanker Eddie Halvey will be joining them, and the

Wales squad scrum-half Robert Howley has also signed registration forms.

Lynagh retired after the World Cup when the "drop goal" that went round the world" from his opposite number Rob Andrew sent England into the semi-finals at the expense of the world champions. With eerie symmetry, Andrew, who is the same age as Lynagh, has also since retired from the international game, to help revive Sir John Hall's newly professionalised Newcastle Gosforth.

"I've only played for two clubs, the University of Queensland and Treviso, so I didn't take this decision lightly," Lynagh said yesterday. "My role is to attract people to the club, assist players and help pool our resources of junior players for the future."

"I was described as being in the autumn of my career, which is probably true but I haven't noticed many leaves falling off just yet."

Mike Smith, the club's chief executive, said that Lynagh might be playing at a new home next season. "We hope to be playing at a new arena by next September but we are looking for a club and not just a stadium."

And Lynagh's captain and prospective half-back partner Brian Davies quickly brought the new man down to earth. "Mike is a superstar and he will need a sense of humour once he joins us for that first training session. Then he'll be just another Sarrie. And from what I've seen of him he'll fit in very well."

Euro-sceptics finish on the losing side



Richard Williams

IT COST £30,000, yet it looks like a kindergarten class's attempt to make a Christmas decoration out of the innards of a discarded TV set and a pot of silver paint. The sort of thing, in other words, that might bring its creator the Turner Prize in a particularly barren year.

Holding it aloft in triumph on Sunday afternoon, Stade Toulousain's players had to be careful not to impale themselves on its various spiky protrusions. But, as they had just finished showing us, Heineken's European Cup is definitely worth playing for.

The French club's tumultuous victory over Cardiff provided marvellous entertainment for the 20,000 thousand inside the Arms Park and for those at home who did not prefer the competing televised claims of the FA Cup or Serie A. Quite clearly this was the best thing to happen to rugby since the invention of the World Cup, and by the end of the decade it will have assumed just as significant a role in the European game.

As the Welsh pulled level with the last kick of normal time, only to be denied by Christophe Deylaud's penalty in the dying moments of the extra half-hour, the real losers were the game's administrators in England and Scotland.

That is no surprise. By denying their players the chance to participate in this inaugural tournament they were selling themselves a dummy, simply maintaining the level of decision-making that has cost them first respect and then power, leaving their sport ripe for the Murdoch takeover.

AS WE know, those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it. Forty years ago the brilliant minds of the Football Association kept English clubs out of the first European Cup, a competition that has subsequently given untold amounts of pleasure to enthusiasts around the continent, regaling us with the exploits of Di Stefano, Eusebio, Rivera, Cruyff, Müller, Platini and their successors.

Eventually it also enriched, spiritually and materially, those English clubs whose representatives have held the

trophy aloft. Who can imagine that the rewards of rugby's European Cup will be any less beneficial?

There will be other, happier parallels with soccer. On Sunday it took a while to get used to the fact that the French were wearing the red shirts and the Welsh were in blue, but that merely provided a useful reminder that this was not an international but an inter-club match.

In that light, and bearing in mind the consequences of the new free market, those who enjoyed the Real Madrid Di Stefano and Puskas and the Juventus of Platini and Boniek will find it easy to imagine the electric atmosphere of a European cup tie between, say, a Bath XV featuring Joel Stransky and Jeff Wilson and a Racing Club XV France team with Robert Jones and Chester Williams.

And there will be hard lessons, as there already were on Sunday. When a Frenchman received the ball, he looked around him and usually found a colleague running into space at a cunning angle and inviting a pass. When a Welshman was put in possession, invariably his only option was the obvious one — easily read, easily nullified.

Only Cardiff's spirit kept them in the game. It was, to an almost spooky degree, like watching various British soccer teams in European matches this season: the same dogged physical commitment, the same pervasive absence of imagination.

STILL, it was a great cup final, and a powerful harbinger of better rugby to come. "There's a skill and speed that makes it a couple of levels above league rugby," Adrian Davies, Cardiff's stand-off, said afterwards. Only by constantly exposing themselves to competition at this level can the players of the British Isles overcome their limitations and rise to meet the challenge of a world game hurtling towards the future with a dizzying momentum.

Rugby is currently in such turmoil that when the Sunday Times, a Murdoch paper, mentioned in its story last weekend that this year's Five Nations Championship would begin in June, the reader's first response was to assume that this was not a slip of the pen but an exclusive on Sky TV's latest coup.

One thing is for sure: tickets for next year's European Cup final will be a lot harder to come by. Whatever the blazers may think about it, Europe's rugby men are now playing for something greater than a funny-shaped trophy.

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Horse laugh at the double

Graham Rock on a case of mistaken identity at Southwell

WHEN a trainer deliberately substitutes one horse for another it is called a ringer; when he does it without knowing, it is a cock-up for which racing was unprepared yesterday.

At the centre of the drama was the veteran trainer Reg Hollinshead, who took two horses to Southwell races: Taniyar, due to run first, and Loch Style. Both are bay geldings of similar cast — and therein lay the problem.

While Taniyar remained in his box, Loch Style was saddled and run in his stead. Disastrously, given that he was the 5-2 second favourite. The error was not discovered until Hollinshead returned to the unsaddling enclosure.

Loch Style failed to finish at the rear of the 1/2-mile race, not surprisingly as he was supposed to run over seven furlongs. His jockey was dismissive of his efforts. "The only way Loch Style would stay beyond a mile would be in a horse-

box," said Ray Cochrane. The Jockey Club was perplexed at Hollinshead's error. "We can't find any precedent for this, and at this stage can't comment on which rules have been breached," it said.

"I can only apologise to the people who have had a few quid on," said the 72-year-old Hollinshead, who first took out a trainers' licence in 1951. He was reported to have been among those who backed the inadvertent ringer.

One man who had more than a few quid on was Philip Marshall, from Sutton-in-Ashfield, who staked £700 with on-course bookies. "It's a disgrace," he said. "I am hoping I will get my money back."

The high-street bookies, despite having to pay out on the race's odds-on winner Yougo, decided to do the decent thing. A Coral spokesman explained: "We are returning the stakes to all those punters who backed the horse they thought was Taniyar."

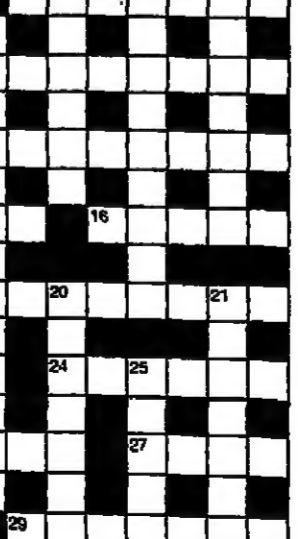
"We didn't see too much of our punters over Christmas so you could say we are extending the season of goodwill."

Racing, page 13

His school supplied boys to play urchins in various operas at Covent Garden, and Johnson was regularly clutched to Maria Callas's bosom. One friend describes this as 'the defining moment of Frank's life'.

Guardian Crossword No 20,544

Set by Quantum



Across
1 One of the game that's no hard worker (7)
5 Cathedral assembly getting division of work (7)
10 Row not right: it makes one hot and bothered (5)
11 Builder could make an indiscreet remark (4,1,5)
12 Sort of system a student follows after long row (5)
13 Fod to run out with information that's merely gas? (7)
14 Worked round jade that's broken off (9)
16 Group tutorial? (5)
17 Critics initially at start of play? They're prickly (5)
19 Involved iff I'd and, being restrained (9)
23 Me a lilac? Not exactly (6)
24 Unpractical DIY with a lot of paper for one (6)

Down
2 Free-range thinker? (7)
3 Horse being guided losing half-rein (5)
4 Left around tangled with little knots (7)
6 Conrade at sea in good spirits (6)
7 Probed far not quite cooked (but partly cooked) (9)
8 Avoids school, going in various directions (7)
9 Room monitors inactive among the top classes? (6,7)

Solution tomorrow
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